To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Durwood Clay Dunn entitled "Cades Cove During the Nineteenth Century." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in History.

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CADES COVE DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Durwood Clay Dunn

August 1976

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ABSTRACT

Although the Southern mountaineer has emerged as a distinctive figure in the fiction of local colorists since the 1880's, few actual historical investigations of specific locales in the region have been undertaken to examine the confusing plethora of stereotypes and hypotheses surrounding the Appalachian South. Using family records, oral history, and manuscript census returns, the present study of Cades Cove, a small mountain community in East Tennessee, attempts to remedy this situation by carefully analyzing the nature and degree of change within the community, and the extent to which cultural continuity existed throughout the nineteenth century.

Enormous economic and social changes marked the cove's development from its first settlement by the Oliver family in 1818 through the decade of the 1850's. During this period of growth, new immigrants brought both cultural diversity and innovative ideas; entrepreneurs such as Daniel D. Foute and Dr. Calvin Post undertook numerous projects to improve and develop the cove's economy; and the regional boom in farm prices combined with the high fertility of the soil allowed the average farmer greatly to increase his holdings and per capita income. The period was also characterized by movement of families in the mainstream of the Westward Movement into and out of the cove from many parts of the United States and several foreign countries.

Political change in the form of the Civil War drastically altered the lives of the cove people, however. Rejecting innovation in the

political order, they opposed the confederates surrounding them, and were in turn brutally attacked by North Carolina guerrillas whose retaliatory pillaging of the community systematically destroyed both lives and property. The resulting postwar bitterness brought a basic change in the inhabitants' attitude; they became suspicious of strangers and hostile to many types of innovation. Their social retrospection was underlined by a continuing postwar regional depression in agricultural prices which slowed, but did not completely destroy, their market economy.

Cultural continuity was also evident in the cove's development. The surrounding wilderness remained a constant factor in their lives throughout the century. The difficulties of initial settlement and the later ordeal of the Civil War bound the community closely together, and this closeness was reinforced after the war by the growth of large, extended families. Religion also provided a thread of continuity as the dominant Primitive Baptist church attempted to maintain its orthodoxy in the face of many secular changes. Out of their sense of community and desire for continuity emerged a distinctive folk culture, marked by a shared communal consciousness—of one another, incidents in their lives, and an intimate knowledge of the cove's geography.

This study concludes that the people of Cades Cove appear far more complex in their historical development than the standard stereotypes of the Southern mountaineer in fiction or popular literature would indicate. In the final analysis, they were representative of the broad mainstream of nineteenth century American culture and society from whence they came,

and their condition at the end of the century is explained both by the enormous changes in their political and economic environment, and by the continuity of their communal life style and geographical isolation.

PREFACE

Although the mountain people and culture of Southern Appalachia were not identified or seriously examined as a separate entity from mainstream America until the 1880's, in the intervening years they have become the subject of both enduring stereotypes and literary, if not scholarly, debate. Before 1880, only three humorists—Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, George Washington Harris, and Harden E. Taliaferro—had considered the Southern mountaineer noteworthy or distinct enough to caricature. With the advent of local colorists such as Mary Noailles Murfree, however, the entire mountain culture was depicted in fictional works which brought national recognition to the area.[1]

Murfree painted a sympathetic—if unrealistic and highly romanticized—portrait of the mountain people. By the late 1880's, however, a rival group, motivated by both genuine reformist impulses and a naturalistic reaction to the saccharine excesses of the local colorists, began a systematic literary counterattack. These "Mountain Muckrakers," obsessed with the degradation and misfortune of the mountain people, depicted them as living lives of stark brutality and desperation, an existence particularly characterized by excessive cruelty to women and children.[2] Yet another group of writers at the turn of the century idealized the

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[1] Robert Love Taylor, Jr., Mainstreams of Mountain Thought: Attitudes of Selected Figures in the Heart of the Appalachian South, 1877-1903 (Doctoral dissertation, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1971), 2-22.

[2] Ibid.

Southern mountaineer as the last vestige of "pure" Anglo-Saxon Americans living an existence far superior to their fellow Americans in a nation beset by the complications of burgeoning industrialization, urbanization, and an influx of "un-American" foreign immigrants.

Confronted with this bewildering plethora of stereotypes, few scholars have made any effort to analyze the conglomerate area we call Southern Appalachia. The present study of Cades Cove, a small mountain community in the heart of the Great Smoky Mountains, was undertaken to examine a specific geographical entity as it grew and developed throughout the nineteenth century. The advantages of such a study in considering basic questions about the larger region are obvious. Was Cades Cove a "neo-frontier," a frontier area which had simply never developed further, or a frontier which had retrogressed due to particular geographical or environmental factors?

How did the cove develop in relation to the region and state? Was it always backward, or had its comparative position in, say, 1840, been much closer to the mainstream of the Westward Movement than after the Civil War? When and how did its citizens develop a separate culture, and what were the distinguishing characteristics of that culture? In all these questions, the key problem throughout this study has been the origin, degree, and nature of change—how and when Cades Cove deviated from regional and national norms of development—and the causes of this change.

The goal of this dissertation—to analyze carefully the development of a single community in Southern Appalachia—imposes critical limitations

on forming broader generalizations about the region as a whole, however. Key features in the cove's development, notably the high fertility of its soil from the days of earliest settlement, determined that the community would develop quite differently from other less fortunate areas of the larger region. Actually, the uniqueness of these individual mountain communities, often situated only a few miles across high mountains from each other, yet quite distinctive in their culture and economy, demonstrates the dangers of making any broad generalization about Southern Appalachia or the mountain people. With these limitations clearly in mind, the present study should nevertheless serve as a useful testing ground for larger hypotheses long held by regional scholars.

The main source of primary materials for this study is the Oliver family collection, which the writer inherited. The first permanent white family to settle in the cove, the Olivers kept extensive records of the community's history in the form of diaries, church records, unpublished sketches and histories, and miscellaneous memorabilia—Civil War passes, store receipts, tax records, deeds, and other quasi-legal transactions—which made this study possible. In addition to these written sources, many of the folkways and traditions of the nineteenth century community have been preserved orally, and have been carefully utilized throughout this study both as cited sources and as a constant monitor for written records. Through interviews with former residents, attitudes and personal reactions of the cove people to various crises are thus illuminated by the folk memory to a degree impossible to obtain from written records alone.

Regarding the heavy use of Oliver family records, an inevitable question or critique of this study must be: to what extent did the Olivers form an elite, or how representative were they of the average cove farming yeomanry throughout the century? The answer lies in the type of leadership which the family exercised; their influence was primarily moral and depended on the voluntary respect or esteem they commanded from their neighbors of equal or greater property. They were certainly never wealthy themselves, and their social position was comparable to any other "respectable" family in an essentially egalitarian society which judged both individuals and families on the basis of their behavior—public and private—rather than on the amount or type of their material possessions. In this sense, the Olivers were certainly "representative" of the average cove farmer—representative in a way such entrepreneurs as Daniel D. Foute could never be.

Other primary source material from outside observers which corroborates the conclusions drawn from the Oliver records include Dr. Abraham Jobe's Memoirs and the record of Lt. Charles G. Davis, a Union soldier escaping Confederate prisons who was assisted by the cove people during the Civil War. Particularly useful in delineating economic and demographic changes were the manuscript census returns from the cove between 1830 and 1880. Finally, the work of genealogists and local historians, notably the excellent work of Inez Burns on Blount County, has illuminated the cove's development within the larger region and assisted the writer in placing many otherwise loose ends in a meaningful context.

The writer is particularly indebted to the wise counsel and encouragement of the late Stanley J. Folmsbee, dean of Tennessee historians. To the late Dr. Norbert Riedl, gratitude is due for exposing me to the broader questions and opportunities of the German Volkskunde, a branch of cultural anthropology particularly suitable to the scholarly analysis of East Tennessee's folk culture. Dr. LeRoy P. Graf deserves special commendation for his patience and innumerable valuable suggestions throughout this study. Finally, appreciation must be expressed to Drs. John R. Finger and Charles O. Jackson for their careful reading of the manuscript and for their incisive criticisms.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	EXPLORATION AND EARLY SETTLEMENT	1
II.	THE IMPACT OF THE WILDERNESS	34
III.	THE MARKET ECONOMY	74
IV.	RELIGION AND THE CHURCHES	126
V.	THE CIVIL WAR	167
VI.	THE FOLK CULTURE	199
VII.	CONCLUSION	226
BIBLIOGRAPHY		233
APPENDIX		248
VITA		252

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		PAGE
1.	John Oliver Cabin	57
2.	Peter Cable Cabin	58
3.	Carter Shields Cabin	59
4.	Elijah Oliver House	61
5.	Henry Whitehead House	62
6.	Oliver-Tipton House	63
7.	Cades Cove Tour Map	249
8.	The Coves of Blount County	250
9.	Cades Cove Quadrangle, U. S. Dept. of the Interior, Geological Survey Map	251

CHAPTER I

EXPLORATION AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

Cades Cove is first and foremost a distinctive geological entity whose very structural uniqueness has from earliest times shaped the character of her inhabitants and conditioned, if not determined, the pattern of their development. Secluded within the western part of the Great Smoky Mountains, which lie in eastern Tennessee and western North Carolina, the cove and its environs form a segment of the much larger Appalachian Highlands, that long belt of mountain ranges extending through the Southeastern states from Virginia to Georgia.[1] In their own right the Appalachian Highlands are quite unique. Describing the Unaka Chain, of which the Great Smoky Mountains are a part, one of Tennessee's pioneer geologists, James M. Safford, over a hundred years ago aptly characterized this range:

> Its "bald" summits, its semi-arctic plants and balsam peaks, the magnificent scenery it affords; its roaring rapids and wild cascades; its game, and the "trout" of its cold streams, altogether, make it an elysium.[2]

What is most surprising about the geological structure of Cades Cove is the flatness, or plain of low relief, of this elliptical valley in sharp contrast to the rough mountainous topography on all sides. Geologically, the cove is best described as a fenster, or window, formed

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[1] Philip B. King and Arthur Stupka, "The Great Smoky Mountains, Their Geology and Natural History," Scientific Monthly, LXXI (July, 1950), 31.

[2] James M. Safford, Geology of Tennessee (Nashville, 1869), 22.

by the overthrust of Unicoi rocks of Lower Cambrian age over Knox dolomite of Canadian age at such a low angle that the hanging wall has been worn through, exposing the footwall.[3] Because of this Greak Smoky Thrust and subsequent differential erosion, there is considerable variation in the types of soil on the valley floor and in the surrounding mountains, a fact which later would have important implications for the settlement pattern of the cove. Two neighboring coves, Wear and Tuckaleechee, are often grouped with Cades Cove by geologists for the sake of comparison, but neither can match the relative evenness of the floor of Cades Cove, with an average elevation of 1,750 feet, or compete with its almost complete enclosure by the surrounding mountains, the highest of which rise 2,000 feet above the cove.[4]

In addition to describing the physical contours which make Cades Cove unique, geological research also explains the single most important characteristic of the cove for human habitants: the fertility of the soil. In 1869, Safford argued that because of their remarkably productive soils, the limestone cove areas of East Tennessee, particularly Cades Cove, deserved more attention from geologists than they had received. He characterized the latter as "remarkable for its rich bottoms and its

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[3]Charles W. Wilson, Jr., "The Great Smoky Thrust Fault in the Vicinity of Tuckaleechee, Wear, and Cades Coves, Blount and Sevier Counties, Tennessee," Tennessee Academy of Science Journal, X (January, 1935), 58-59. See also Fred H. Rittgers, A Geographical Survey of Blount County, Tennessee (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1941), 44-57.

[4]William W. Burchfiel, Jr., The Unaka Mountains of Tennessee and North Carolina (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1941), 15-17.

meadow-like features," adding that it was "noted as a grass producing area . . . well suited to small grain, grass and fruit."[5] He also praised the superior climate and elevation of the cove, which made it "cool, and in the summer, delightful." Later geologists have confirmed Safford's contention that the coves usually contained more fertile soil than most surrounding areas in the valley of East Tennessee.[6]

Ironically, the limestone base of Cades Cove, which gives such fertility to the soil, accounts for the geologic development of the cove as a fenster through differential erosion, because limestone is soluble and poorly resistant to erosion, particularly in an area of heavy rainfall.[7] Eighteen streams and branches enter the cover, all of which eventually contribute to Abram's Creek, which flows out the west side over tough blue slates of the Ocoee Series one mile west of the cove at Abram's Falls. These slates, which are very resistant, check the eroding power of the creek and allow the development of a temporary base level of erosion in the cove. Although the streams are intermittent, the alluvial material on the floor of the cove absorbs most of the excess water. Thus "the ground retains moisture and is excellent for farming in even the driest years."[8] (See Figure 7, Appendix.)

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[5]Safford, Geology, 52, 226.

[6]Ibid.; C. H. Gordon, "Notes on the Geology of the Cove Areas of East Tennessee," Science, LI (May, 1920), 492.

[7]King and Stupka, "Great Smoky Mountains," 36.

[8]Robert B. Neuman, "Notes on the Geology of Cades Cove, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Tennessee," Tennessee Academy of Science Journal, XXII (July, 1947), 167-68.

This natural abundance of Cades Cove, and the obvious suitability of its fertile soil to even the most primitive forms of agriculture, must have early attracted human attention. The cove's meadow-like features have always lured many types of game, notably deer, to feed on the lush grasses along Abram's Creek. Whether any of the tribes which pre-date the Cherokee used the cove for their hunting ground is unknown. Cherokee Indians were living there at the time of the first permanent white settlement in 1818, but unfortunately the early pioneers took little descriptive note in their diaries and records of the cove's first inhabitants.[9] By 1838, the last remnant had been rounded up to join their kinsmen in the infamous "trail of tears" march to Oklahoma Territory.

A few fascinating clues do remain, however, to whet our curiosity. Abram's Creek is generally assumed to have been named after Old Abram, the fierce Cherokee chieftain who was such a terror to early Tennessee settlers and who led the last war party against the beleaguered Watauga settlements at the close of the Revolutionary War.[10] Cades Cove was

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[9]Recent research in early American Indian-white relations indicates that conclusive evidence concerning the number of Indians in any particular area is almost impossible to obtain from Anglo-Saxon sources. Since the overall estimate of Indians living in North America has been drastically revised upward, it is not unreasonable to assume that the number of Cherokee living in Cades Cove in 1818 who were displaced by white settlement is much higher than the pioneer records would indicate. See Wilbur R. Jacobs, "The Tip of an Iceberg: Pre-Columbian Indian Demography and Some Implications for Revisionism," William and Mary Quarterly, XXXI (January, 1974), 123-29.

[10]Paul M. Fink, "Smoky Mountains History as Told in Place-Names," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 6 (1934), 5 (hereafter cited as ETHS Publications); J. G. M. Ramsey, Annals of Tennessee (Charleston, 1853), 156.

named after another lesser Cherokee chief, Kade, living there at the time of initial white settlement and well known to the early settlers.[11] Unfortunately, white settlement resulted in an almost complete deculturization in terms of the Indian place-names, which might otherwise have greatly contributed to the store of folk culture. Most of the local geographic features of the cove consequently bear names given by the first generation of white settlers.

The Indian name for Cades Cove, or at least for a settlement in the cove on Cove Creek, was Tsiyahi, or otter place (from TsiyᏏ, otter, and yᎥ, locative).[12] In his memoirs Lieutenant Henry Timberlake mentions seeing many "brooks well stored with fish, otters, and beavers," in the general vicinity of Cades Cove in 1762.[13] But the initial white

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[11]The Oliver family's account of Chief Kade is corroborated by the papers of Peter Snider (in the possession of a great-granddaughter, Miss Bertha Dunn, Townsend, Tennessee), an early trader with the Cherokee Indians who lived in neighboring Tuckaleechee Cove. The story that Cades Cove was named after Chief Abraham's wife, Kate, is spurious, but has unfortunately been so often repeated in the historical literature of the period that it is now almost accepted as fact. The earliest correct published account of Chief Kade is given in Robert Lindsay Mason, The Lure of the Great Smokies (Boston, 1927), 11. The latest assertion on the origin of the name Cades Cove was made by Adele McKenzie, a staff writer for the Maryville-Alcoa Daily Times, which published a letter recently discovered from one J. Cades to H. W. Myers in Cades Cove in 1881. McKenzie assumes that the name itself is evidence that the cove was named after this J. Cades, who said in the letter he had once lived there. But the name Cades does not occur in any of the early records, deeds, grants or census of Cades Cove, and the late date of this letter, 1881, makes it highly questionable as evidence without other corroboration. See the Maryville-Alcoa Daily Times, June 14, 1974.

[12]James Mooney, comp., "Myths of the Cherokee," Bureau of American Ethnology, Nineteenth Annual Report (2 vols. Washington, 1900), I, 538.

[13]Samuel Cole Williams, ed., Lieut. Henry Timberlake's Memoirs, 1756-1765 (Johnson City, 1927), 69. Timberlake at this point was visiting Chilhowey (Chilhowee), a Cherokee town which he indicates on

settlers do not mention otters in their written records or oral traditions; it is probable that these animals had been hunted to extinction for their pelts before 1800. This important Cherokee place-name was discovered by the pioneer American ethnologist, James Mooney, during the last decade of the nineteenth century. Mooney's primary sources were the remnant Cherokees living on the Qualla reservation in western North Carolina and elderly emigrants in Oklahoma who had left this area over half a century earlier.[14] Thus what scant knowledge we have of pre-white Cherokee life or civilization in Cades Cove is not transmitted through the people who displaced them.

Yet Tsiyahi must have had some significance to the Cherokee political entity before 1800, if for no other reason than the strategic location of the cove in relation to some of the more important Indian trails of the region. One such route extended from the west prong of Little Pigeon River up the waters of Walden Creek, and entered Wear Valley by following Cove Creek several miles through a narrow gorge of cascades.[15] This route eventually reached Little River in Tuckaleechee Cove, where several trails led to Cades Cove, ten miles over a high

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a map of his own making to be just southwest of Cades Cove. Timberlake's map also delineates the Chilhowee Mountains and outlines the course of Abram's Creek, which drains Cades Cove. See Paul M. Fink, "Early Explorers in the Great Smokies," ETHS Publications, No. 5 (1933), 57-58.

[14]Mooney, "Myths of the Cherokee," 11-12; Walter Hough, "James Mooney," in Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds., Dictionary of American Biography (20 vols., 2 supplements, and index; New York, 1928-1958), XIII, 110-11.

[15]Inez Burns, "Settlement and Early History of the Coves of Blount County, Tennessee," ETHS Publications, No. 24 (1952), 44.

range of mountains. Writing in 1823, John Haywood states that a Virginia trader, Mr. Vaughan, used this route as early as 1740 to reach the Cherokee Nation, and that it "was an old path when he first saw it."[16]

Another major route to Cades Cove was the Tuckaleechee and Southeastern Trail which separated from the Great Indian Warpath where it crossed the French Broad River. This trail passed near present-day Sevierville to the Tuckaleechee villages on Little River, and from there went in a southeasterly direction through Indian Gap to the lower Cherokee settlements in South Carolina.[17] A short route from the Valley towns to the Overhill towns of the Cherokee passed through Egwanulti Gap (corrupted by white pronunciation to the present Ekanetelee) and skirted the lower end of Cades Cove on its way to the Little Tennessee River.[18] This latter trail leading into Cades Cove through Ekanetelee Gap was probably the most important route for later white settlers, particularly for those from the Pennsylvania-German settlements in Rowan County, North Carolina.[19] (See Figure 8, Appendix.)

The proximity to Cades Cove of all these major trails which connected the Valley Cherokee in South Carolina with their Overhill

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[16]John Haywood, The Civil and Political History of the State of Tennessee (Knoxville, 1823), 40-41.

[17]William E. Myer, comp., "Indian Trails of the Southeast," Bureau of American Ethnology, Forty-Second Annual Report (Washington, 1928), 772. Myer's description of the major Cherokee trails and their exact location in reference to present towns and landmarks is the most complete published record.

[18]Fink, "Early Explorers," 56.

[19]Burns, "Settlement and Early History," 45.

relatives indicates that Tsiyahi must have had some spatial significance to the Cherokee polity before 1800. Possibly it was no more than a hunting camp, but its strategic location near major arteries of commerce and communication within the Cherokee Nation could well have justified a larger permanent settlement. As the Cherokees withdrew steadily from the pressures of continuing white encroachments in upper East Tennessee following their defeat in the Revolutionary War, these same routes and trails first led white explorers and later permanent settlers into Cades Cove and the surrounding areas.

The identity of the first white explorers of Cades Cove remains clouded in obscurity because such records as were kept on the Southern frontier were often lost or destroyed during the tumultuous years of the Revolutionary War. The general area remained nominally in North Carolina's control until Tennessee became a federal territory in 1790, following North Carolina's belated ratification of the Constitution.[20] North Carolina's long-standing neglect of her civil and judicial responsibilities in even the more settled areas of East Tennessee had been the basic source of dissatisfaction and impetus toward self-government from the Wataugans to the Franklinites.[21]

Such peripheral areas of East Tennessee as Cades Cove did attract the interest of large land speculators in North Carolina, however.

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[20]Stanley J. Folmsbee, Robert E. Corlew, and Enoch L. Mitchell, History of Tennessee (2 vols. New York, 1960), I, 189.

[21]Samuel Cole Williams, History of the Lost State of Franklin (Johnson City, 1924), 26-33.

Because many of these large speculators were also prominent in the state government, North Carolina took great pains in the cession law of 1789 to reserve for her citizens all prior land claims, including those under the notorious Land Grab Act of 1783 and various acts reserving land as payment for her Revolutionary soldiers. So although her Western lands were formally ceded to the United States in 1789, in actual fact North Carolina reserved much, if not most, of the best Western lands of Tennessee in prior grants.[22]

It is therefore logical that the first recorded claim to land in the cove was a North Carolina grant for 5,000 acres in a place called Cades Cove on the south side of the French Broad and Holston rivers and west of Big Pigeon, issued in 1794 to Hugh Dunlap. In 1809, Dunlap was reissued the grant from the new state of Tennessee because the earlier grant had been lost from the secretary's office in North Carolina.[23] The fact that this second grant was subject to previous occupant-entries and school reservations indicates other settlers had claimed land in Cades Cove during the interim.

It is evident from the remaining land grants and from allusions to land granted in Cades Cove in wills and other records, for which no

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[22]Folmsbee and others, Tennessee, I, 189. See also William H. Masterson, William Blount (Baton Rouge, 1954), 350. Blount was an excellent example of a prominent North Carolina government official whose political career was inextricably caught up in "the overwhelming business project of his age—land speculation."

[23]North Carolina Grant No. 172, registered April 18, 1794, Eastern District, Book 7, p. 263; Book 9, p. 155. Tennessee State Archives, Nashville.

actual deed or grant can be found, that in the decade after 1800 the cove's rich land attracted many potential settlers. Yet these earlier explorers left few traces of their visit to the cove, and no explanation of why they did not remain. In 1809, John Smith and William Crowson petitioned the state legislature for entry rights in Cades Cove based on earlier North Carolina land grants. These rights were confirmed in 1820 when Aaron Crowson, son of William, petitioned the Tennessee legislature, claiming that his father and a Mr. James Ross had both possessed "the Right of Occupancy and preemption to a Tract of land in Cades Cove on the waters of the Tennessee on the 6th day of February 1796."[24] The first Tennessee grant, based on these older claims of the Crowsons, was issued to William ("Fighting Billy") Tipton on March 23, 1821, for 640 acres in Cades Cove.[25]

From the confusion of claims to the land of the cove in its presettlement period definite patterns emerge which could characterize land ownership throughout the nineteenth century. After 1800, two distinctive types of individuals challenged the wilderness for title to the land. The first was the large, often absentee owner, who through key political connections laid claim to the land without ever actually seeing it, or after only a cursory visit. The Crowsons and William Tipton certainly represented this type; neither ever lived in the

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[24] Petitions, Box 24, Tennessee State Archives, Nashville.

[25] Register of East Tennessee, Book "O," p. 538, Tennessee State Archives, Nashville. This deed is also recorded in Blount County records in Deed Book 3, p. 3, Blount County Courthouse, Maryville, Tennessee. Hereafter cited as Blount Deeds, Wills, etc.

cove.[26] Tipton, at least, speculated in land throughout East Tennessee; scarcely any still undeveloped tract of land in the area does not bear documentary testimony to his wide-ranging interests.

Although it is certainly dangerous to attempt to characterize or represent William Tipton of Carter County as any particular type, he nevertheless played an important role as the first large scale landowner in Cades Cove. A Revolutionary soldier at the age of fifteen, he followed a familiar pattern on the American frontier of an entrepreneur who first buys large amounts of undeveloped land and then attempts to interest others in settling on these lands to improve their value.[27] A curious blend of self-interest and public spirit prompted men like William Tipton to develop areas such as Cades Cove, and the entrepreneur seen in this light emerges as a necessary and not malign catalyst in the settlement process.

William's brother, John, was the mortal enemy of John Sevier; both Tipton brothers had led the opposition to Sevier's popular movement for independence in East Tennessee which culminated in the establishment of the abortive state of Franklin. John Tipton was acting on behalf of large land speculators in North Carolina who did not wish to see their

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[26]Another instance of absentee land speculation is found in a Tennessee grant for 320 acres in Cades Cove to George Snider, dated November 17, 1817, as an occupant claim, recorded in the office of James Calloway, principal surveyor of the Hiwassee District on February 28, 1822. Charles A. Richey, Chief of Land Planning, Department of the Interior, Washington, to Inez Burns, October 2, 1950. George Snider, an ancestor of the author, was definitely not living in Cades Cove in 1817.

[27]Knoxville, Register, November 17, 1849.

claims under the notorious Land Grab Act of 1783 jeopardized by an independent government in Tennessee.[28] In perspective, then, the Tipton entrepreneur did not hesitate to align himself against a popular cause, if such a cause threatened his own immediate claims or interests.

Fortunately, however, no such conflict was initially involved in settling Cades Cove. William Tipton freely sold land to his numerous relatives, beginning with 426 acres in 1821 to Joshua Jobe. The following year he sold another 426 acres to Isaac Tipton of Carter County; in 1824, 107 acres to Jacob Tipton, his son; in 1825, 80 acres to his daughter, Martha Hart; in 1827, 103 acres to James Henry; and in 1830, 640 acres to Thomas Tipton.[29] Even after all these sales, the extent of William Tipton's holdings in the cove is revealed in his will of 1848, in which he left 1,256 acres known as the "Iron Works tract," the "Potato Patch" of 500 acres, and a survey of unnamed acreage on Rich Gap.[30]

It was one thing, however, to own land in the cove, and quite another actually to settle in this remote site, completely cut off from neighboring settlements by high mountains. Cades Cove was not legally open to settlement until after Calhoun's Treaty of 1819 with the

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[28]Carl S. Driver, John Sevier, Pioneer of the Old Southwest (Chapel Hill, 1932), 92-95.

[29]Blount Deeds, Books 2, 3, 4, 5 (1821-1836). See also Burns, "Settlement and Early History," 59.

[30]Blount Wills, Book 1, p. 197.

Cherokees,[31] but this legal nicety did not prevent transitory pioneers from moving into the cove before that date, or the Indians from remaining there afterwards. The combination, however, of isolation and hostile Indians certainly delayed permanent white settlement in Cades Cove until 1818. Neighboring Tuckaleechee Cove was by comparison settled in the 1790's by Peter Snider, and rapidly filling up during the first decade of the nineteenth century. And even there Snider, a friendly trader with the Cherokees who spoke their language, had been forced to leave on one occasion until Indian hostility subsided.[32]

So the problem of actual settlement devolved on the second type of individual characteristic of Cades Cove during the nineteenth century: the small yeoman farmer whose main interest was in farming intensely a small acreage (usually less than 130 acres of land). It is curious that these small farmers, who would constitute the bulk of the cove population and determine its social structure, usually were uninterested in

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[31] William R. Garrett and Albert V. Goodpasture, History of Tennessee (Nashville, 1903), 135 and map. For a more complete discussion of Calhoun's Treaty, see Folmsbee and others, Tennessee, I, 273, 287-88. Calhoun's Treaty ceded three tracts of land not included in former treaties. Two of these were in Tennessee, including the Hiwassee District in which Cades Cove is located. Actually, the treaty gave a respite from immediate pressure for removal of the Cherokees to the West, since a provision offering individual Indians citizenship and a square mile of land was renewed from a former treaty. So the Indians were not immediately removed from the Hiwassee District in 1819, as is erroneously stated by Randolph A. Shields, "Cades Cove in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," in Robert M. McBride, ed., More Landmarks of Tennessee History (Nashville, 1969), 32.

[32] Interview on March 23, 1973, with Miss Bertha Dunn, Townsend, Tennessee, a great-granddaughter of Peter Snider. Snider was warned of impending danger and advised to leave temporarily by a friendly chief, Tickiniski. See also Burns, "Settlement and Early History," 47.

speculating in other tracts of land, even when they had the cash.[33] If they received bounty land for war services, they usually sold it quickly to the large land speculators.[34] The richness of the cove soil offers one explanation for such intense attachment to relatively small farms, for even modest efforts could not fail to reap substantial harvests from the cove's fertile limestone basin.

Such a man was John Oliver, Cades Cove's first permanent white settler. He was born in 1793 in Carter County, Tennessee, but practically no trace of his parents or any close relatives can be found there. The one dominating fact surrounding Oliver's early years in Carter County is the abysmal poverty in which he lived. In the frontier society of upper East Tennessee during the first decade of the nineteenth century, even the poorest of men could afford to own some land, since land was plentiful, and labor was scarce.[35] Yet no trace remains to indicate that

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[33]Correlation of the 1830, 1840, and 1850 census records of Cades Cove with the land deeds in the Blount County Courthouse, Maryville, Tennessee, clearly substantiates the fact that most of the mountain land, usually considered speculative, was held by large entrepreneurs such as Daniel D. Foute, and by outside holding companies. One possible explanation is that the cove people held these mountain areas to be communal, since the absentee landowners exerted little control over their mountain holdings.

[34]An excellent example of this very common practice are two tracts of bounty land which John Oliver received for his services in the War of 1812 and promptly sold. The first, warrant No. 31577, for 80 acres under the act of 1850, was sold June 15, 1852, to Jacob Halderman; the second, warrant No. 46352, for 80 acres under the act of 1855, was sold May 21, 1858, to Noah N. Kaufman. Commissioner of the General Land Office, United States Department of the Interior, Washington.

[35]From the Oliver family history, "Sketches of the Olivers," written between 1931 and 1934 by a grandson of the first John Oliver, William Howell Oliver, who was born in Cades Cove May 16, 1857, and died there September 13, 1940. In manuscript form, this 151 page history, in the

John Oliver owned even an acre of land in Carter County before he left in 1818. Oliver was a collier by trade, and there is some evidence that he lived on land belonging to Samuel Tipton, a Carter County entrepreneur who owned a forge among his wide-ranging possessions, in addition to a tract of land in Cades Cove.[36]

The transforming catalyst which changed the shy, unassuming Oliver, resigned to living at the bottom of the Carter County economic and social scale, into an intrepid pioneer willing to risk his life to possess land of his own, was Andrew Jackson. Caught up in the patriotic fervor of the War of 1812, so popular in the West, John Oliver enlisted at Knoxville, on January 5, 1814, in Captain Adam Winsell's Company, Colonel Ewen Allison's Regiment, East Tennessee Militia, and fought in the battle of Horseshoe Bend on March 27, 1814.[37] Horseshoe Bend would

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author's possession, represents the oldest, and with certain critical limitations, the most complete narrative source on Cades Cove. Because of its importance to this study and frequent use, it is hereafter cited as W. H. Oliver, Sketches.

[36]Will of Samuel Tipton, August 23, 1822, Carter County Wills and Inventories, 1797-1847, pp. 107-12, Carter County Courthouse, Elizabethton, Tennessee. On page 112, Tipton mentions "a tract of land of twenty acres including John Oliver's improvement in Carter County," which was probably the homestead which Oliver lived in before he moved to Cades Cove in 1818. It is not unlikely that he worked in Samuel Tipton's forge, which is mentioned on the same page.

[37]George Andrews, The Adjutant General, War Department, Washington, to John W. Oliver, June 13, 1914; A. D. Hiller, Executive Assistant to the Administrator, Veterans Administration, Washington, to W. Wayne Oliver, January 16, 1937. Both letters in author's possession. For the only published list of the soldiers in Colonel Ewen Allison's Regiment, East Tennessee Militia, War of 1812, see Penelope Johnson Allen, trans., Tennessee Soldiers in the War of 1812: Regiments of Col. Allcorn and Col. Allison (Chattanooga, 1947), 50.

remain a signal experience throughout Oliver's life; even the onslaught of the Civil War, nearly five decades later, could not obscure in his mind the picture of Jackson exhorting his troops to battle. His grandson, William Howell Oliver, later recorded John Oliver's often recounted experiences at Horseshoe Bend:

> He often talked of the war and said that General Jackson was one of the best men he ever seen he never stood back and pushed his men into battle but fought himself as hard as any of them, saying hurrah, boys, hurrah.
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> . . . . . .
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> Another incident that Granfather talked about was The Horseshoe battle in the bend of the Alabama River. The Indians had built bulwarks across the neck of the River and left port holes to shoot through. General Jackson and his men engaged awhile at the port holes until he gave command to charge the walls. My Granfather said that he was the second man that went over the walls the first man was killed and fell against him. He said it was so dark for a time that you could scarcely tell a white man from an Indian. He said they turned the butts of their guns and fought that way, General Jackson hollowing hurrah boys, the Indians had their canoe boats tied up around the bend and in case they had to give up they would jump into their boats and get away. The cherokee Indians fought with General Jackson and there was one old Cherokee by the name of Junaluskee, he swum the river around the bend and cut their boats loose, he said that he would dive as far as he could, and then come up and the bullets would hit the water all around him; he then would dive again and in this way he succeeded in cutting their boats loose. This ruined the Creeks, so they surrendered the greater part of their property to the United States. At the close of this war the United States gave Junaluskee a good farm in Graham County, N. C. for cutting those canoes loose.[38]

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[38]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 1-4. While an individual soldier's account of his own role in any given battle must be regarded with healthy skepticism, Oliver's account of Chief Junuluska's exploits is confirmed by other accounts of the battle. See Grade Steele Woodward, The Cherokees (Norman, 1963), 132. Extended quotations from manuscript sources are hereafter given with no emendation of the original spelling or orthography unless some clarification is necessary to the meaning of the passage.

The respect and admiration which Andrew Jackson engendered in this humble private from East Tennessee had profound psychological and ideological implications for the future political and social development of Cades Cove. Obviously Jackson never knew Oliver personally, and at one point during the war the General had become so exasperated at the "want of cooperation from the East Tennessee troops at a moment when their cooperation was indispensably necessary" that he denounced them bitterly to the Secretary of War.[39] But it is not Jackson himself, with his many inconsistencies, but the reflection of his egalitarian ideology among the mass of poor and inarticulate Americans such as John Oliver, which offers the best key toward understanding the incorporation of the common man into the American political structure.

To be sure, Old Hickory instilled a sense of belonging, of taking part in a great national crusade, in the troops who fought under him. But for John Oliver, the effect of Jackson's personality was more personal and tangible. It was as though Jackson had instilled his own sense of inconquerability, of supreme self-confidence in the face of seemingly impossible odds, into this admiring private. And this new self-confidence, once inspired, would carry John Oliver through all the trials of pioneer rigor involved in settling alone in Cades Cove. Later, when state and region were caught up in the confusion of conflicting loyalties and ideas at the outbreak of the Civil War, the Jacksonian

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[39]Jackson to the Secretary of War, John Armstrong, December 16, 1813, in American State Papers, Military Affairs (7 vols. Washington, 1832-1861), III, 787.

ideology, undimmed and unaltered by time, would dictate again to Oliver the correct attitude and course of action for him and his family, and through them, for the larger community of Cades Cove.[40]

On April 28, 1814, Oliver married on leave of absence from his military service Lucretia Frazier, an orphan girl, who in the terminology of the day had been "bound" over to a family at the death of her English parents. They had been engaged since 1812, and Lucretia, with characteristic fiery temper, had forced the issue by the threat of other suitors.[41] So after his discharge from service on May 26, 1814, Oliver returned to Carter County in much the same outward circumstances as when he had left, with the added responsibility of a high-tempered wife to support. And it was indicative of Lucretia's character that she seldom failed to spur her husband on, or neglected to make him completely sensible of his responsibilities to her. In contrast, the mildest questioning on Oliver's part about the content of his breakfast, for instance, might

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[40]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 4, 23-25. See also the manuscript history of the Olivers entitled "Fifty Years in Cades Cove" by John W. Oliver, son of William Howell. John W. Oliver, born in Cades Cove October 14, 1878, and educated at Maryville College, spent much of his life collecting documents and information relating to the history of the cove, and between 1929 and 1935, led a series of battles before the Tennessee Supreme Court in opposition to condemnation proceedings against Cades Cove by the National Park Service. The three manuscript books written between 1938 and 1946 are a synthesis of much of the information he had collected earlier. They are hereafter cited J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, with appropriate volume and page numbers.

[41]Marriage bond, John Oliver and Lucretia Frazier, April 22, 1812, Marriage Records, Carter County Courthouse, Elizabethton, Tennessee; A. D. Hiller to W. W. Oliver, January 16, 1937; W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 4-5.

prompt the irascible Lucretia to dump without further ceremony the entire contents out into the yard.[42]

So John Oliver was quite amenable to the idea of settling in Cades Cove and carving his own homestead out of the wilderness, when Joshua Jobe, an old friend and fellow soldier in the War of 1812, approached him in 1815. A man of some wealth, Jobe was anxious to improve his own prospects but unwilling to leave the comparative safety of Carter County.[43] In return for land and the necessary equipment, Oliver was induced by Jobe to settle alone with his family in Cades Cove in 1818, where they would later be joined by their Carter County neighbors when all seemed safe.

Consequently, it was a collective effort, as was so often the case on the American frontier, that led to the settlement in Cades Cove, but with one important difference. The entire plan rested on the willingness of one individual, John Oliver, to take his family alone into this isolated area in order to determine whether permanent white settlement was possible there. Oliver was consciously attempting to improve his social as well as economic status, because if the experiment succeeded, his comparative position in the new community would be much higher than his propertyless existence in Carter County. In terms of motivation, the effect of the Jacksonian ideology on John Oliver cannot be overemphasized. Both the

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[42]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 18-19.

[43]For Jobe's service record in the War of 1812, see Allen, Tennessee Soldiers, 50; for more detailed information on the Jobe family, see Samuel Evans Massengill, The Massengills, Massengales, and Variants, 1492-1931 (Bristol, Tennessee, 1931), 842.

theoretical right to a new and better life, and the psychic energy necessary to achieve it, were clearly defined by his understanding of Jacksonian egalitarianism.[44]

Yet the loneliness and isolation of the cove must have chilled even the stoutest hearts as John and Lucretia descended the ancient Indian trail across Rich Mountain with their baby daughter in the early fall of 1818. The exact date of their arrival is not known, but Joshua Jobe did accompany them on the initial trip. The cove lay before them in primordial splendor; there were no cleared lands or roads, and no other white inhabitants.[45] The descending Indian trail across Rich Mountain occasionally opens up on a wide prospect of the cove below, so that one entering the cove by that route cannot fail to be aware of the terrain below. At such points they could clearly see that the cove was completely enclosed by high mountains and was covered by dense forests broken only by the swampy area in the lower end. Occasional glimpses of the Cherokee Indians then living in Cades Cove could only add to their uneasiness. But John and Lucretia were determined to remain, even after Jobe departed.

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[44] J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 8.

[45] W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 5. The first Oliver child, Mary, was born July 18, 1817, in Carter County, and their second, Martha, was born July 28, 1819, in Cades Cove. J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 8. So if their first child was a year old, the date of arrival in the early fall must have been 1818. The Olivers were illegal trespassers on Cherokee land, but the courts of Tennessee declined to handle cases involving removal of whites from Indian Country, although such jurisdiction had been specifically granted to them. See Francis Paul Prucha, American Indian Policy in the Formative Years: The Indian Trade and Intercourse Acts, 1790-1834 (Cambridge, 1962), 164-65.

After spending their first night in an abandoned Indian hut, the Olivers decided to settle in the upper end of the cove, because the lower end was swampy, an environment they believed unhealthy and associated with pestilence. Near the base of the mountain, where they would be partially protected from the bitter mountain winds, John Oliver built his first crude homestead.[46] A later cabin, built in the early 1820's, is still standing today. A pile of stones some twenty-five feet north of the present building marks the chimney of the original 1818 structure. Fifty-five yards from the cabin is the spring which probably determined the selection of this particular site. Lying in a creekbed, it is best located when the stream dries up in the summer, leaving only a small trickle of cold water from the spring itself. The fact that this spring is apparent only in the dry season is corroborative evidence that the Olivers arrived in the early part of autumn.

The winter of 1818-1819 proved crucial to their survival. Neither the Indians, who grazed their cattle along Abram's Creek and wintered them in the canebrakes, nor the wolves, which nightly could be heard howling up in the encircling mountains, threatened the Olivers as seriously as did the prospect of starvation. A collier in Carter County, John Oliver had had little previous experience in farming or hunting. Arrival in the cove after the last growing season soon proved to be a serious mistake. So in spite of the abundant game in the cove, the Oliver family had exhausted their store of food and were facing starvation when the first snow began to fall.[47]

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[46] W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 10.

[47] Ibid., 5-6.

They were rescued, ironically, by the Cherokee Indians living in the area, who had initially been such a source of anxiety to Lucretia. The Indians, evidently, did not feel threatened by the presence of only one white family and brought the starving Olivers dried pumpkin, on which the family mainly subsisted until the following spring.[48] It is interesting to note that in spite of the fact that the Cherokees had saved their lives, the Oliver family later could not remember individual Indians, but always both referred to and conceptualized them as a collective entity: the Indians. The one exception was Chief Kade, for whom the cove was named, but nothing remains about his personality or individual characteristics other than his name.

The spring of 1819 brought several badly needed improvements for the Olivers. Lucretia, never one to suffer in silence, blamed Joshua Jobe, who had persuaded them to come to Cades Cove in the first place, for all their troubles. When Jobe visited them in the spring to see how they had fared, John begged his angry wife to hold her temper. "How are you getting along in this beautiful new country," Jobe asked Lucretia when he saw her. "I am starving to death, Sir, that's how," she sharply retorted.[49] But Jobe replied patiently and promised her the choice of two cows from the herd which his brother was bringing into the cove to graze during the summer months. So Lucretia was pacified with the promise of two milk cows, and both the Olivers were pleased at the

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[48]Interview with John W. Oliver, July 18, 1963.

[49]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 6; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 13-14.

prospect of soon having new neighbors from among their old friends in Carter County.[50]

The sufferings and privations of their first winter in Cades Cove were never forgotten by the Oliver family, but the fertility of the cove soil soon amply repaid them for their sacrifices. Lucretia made the first soap they had since leaving Carter County out of butter from her new cows, with lye made from wood ashes. John cleared the first fields of timber by himself, using his horse to pull up the stumps.[51] Trees too large to be cut had to be girdled. In a process used throughout the American frontier, the farmer cut a girdle or circle around the tree deep into the cambrium layer; the tree eventually died and could then be burned to clear the land.

Wheat grew particularly well on the newly cleared fields in the cove uplands, but Oliver also grew corn, rye, oats, and vegetables in abundance. The pumpkins which had saved their lives during the previous winter grew so abundantly that John later asserted he could "walk over the fields on them without ever touching ground." The Olivers followed the Indian example of keeping their cattle along Abram's Creek, where they grazed on rich grasses during the summer and found forage and protection among the canebrakes during the winter. The completion of a log barn with two pens and a threshing floor between them provided space to store much of the first ample harvest. Finally, John dug a well

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[50] Ibid.

[51] W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 10-11, J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 14.

sixty-four feet deep, and walled it up with smooth stones which he gathered from the fields.[52]

This well, which was destined never to run dry in over a hundred years of continuous use, later represented the deep roots which the Olivers had sunk into the fertile cove soil. But it gave an erroneous sense of permanence which simply did not exist in the 1820's. Life remained very tentative on the frontier, and no better example of this situation exists than the fact that John Oliver did not bother to obtain legal title to his land until as late as 1826, when he bought fifty-five acres from Isaac Hart for one hundred dollars in cash.[53] Even by 1830, most of the inhabitants living in Cades Cove according to the census had not formally registered their deeds at the county courthouse, and many families failed to do so throughout the nineteenth century.[54] In this sense, traces of the frontier mentality remained in Cades Cove long after people living in other areas of Blount County insisted on strict legality in matters of land ownership and title.

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[52] Ibid.; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 7.

[53] Blount Deeds, Book 2, pp. 480-81; Tennessee Grant No. 3397, February 3, 1827, to John Oliver by Absalom C. Renfro, General Entener, Entry Taker's Office of the Hiwassee District, for forty acres, in Blount County, seventh range, east of the meridian, second fractional township, the south half of lot No. 24 for eighty acres. Original grant in author's possession.

[54] A careful correlation between the inhabitants in Cades Cove enumerated by the 1830 census, and Blount Deeds, 1820-1830, shows that less than 10 percent had registered their deeds. Many families reported their land holdings to the captain of their local militia for tax purposes, but most of these early Blount County tax lists have unfortunately been destroyed. Manuscript Returns, Fifth Census of the United States, 1830, Population Schedule, Blount County, Tennessee, microfilm roll no. 178 (National Archives; hereafter cited as 1830 Census, Population, Blount County).

The success of the Oliver family in surviving during the years 1818-1821 paved the way for the development of Cades Cove as a community rather than as a mere geographic entity. In 1821, Joshua Jobe settled there, along with numerous relatives and friends from Carter County.[55] The exact number of families making this initial migration is hard to determine, since many of them moved on to other areas before the 1830 census, and the extant deeds are very inconclusive. But an excellent picture of life in Cades Cove during the 1820's has been left by Jobe's son, Dr. Abraham Jobe, who in later years became a prominent East Tennessee physician and attended Andrew Johnson on his deathbed. Dr. Jobe distinctly remembered moving with his family to the cove in 1821, when he was only four years old "on account of the fertility of the soil, and the superior advantages in raising stock."[56]

With the advent of many new white settlers to the cove in 1821, the posture of the Indians suddenly changed. They had tolerated and even assisted the lone Oliver family, but this sudden influx of settlers threatened their possession of the land itself, and they became abruptly

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[55]Dr. Abraham Jobe, of Elizabethton, Tennessee, Autobiography or Memoirs (written between 1849 and 1905). A complete typed copy is in the Tennessee State Library, Nashville. The original manuscript is in the possession of Mrs. Harlow (Sophie Hunter) Dixon, Durham, N. C. Hereafter cited as Jobe, Autobiography. An entrepreneur of unusually varied business interests, Dr. Jobe received his medical degree from Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky, in March, 1849. His autobiography spans most of the nineteenth century, from his childhood in Cades Cove through his harrowing experiences during the Civil War. Joshua Jobe's purchase from William Tipton of 426 acres in Cades Cove on December 3, 1821, is recorded in Blount Deeds, Book 2, p. 324.

[56]Jobe, Autobiography, 7.

hostile. Dr. Jobe recalled vividly his family's experience with the Indians and delineated the hardening attitude of the settlers towards them:

> The Cherokee Indians who had been such a terror to the settlement in the Watauga Valley and surrounding country, causing the settlers to live in Forts for safety, were still lingering in small bands, in the mountain fastnesses along the range of the Smokey Mountains, which lie immediately south of Cades Cove and form part of its boundary.
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> All went well for a while. Indians could be seen only occasionally prowling around; but would soon leave, and get back into the deep mountain gorges. Game being very plentiful, my uncle was out hunting one day and had wandered farther than usual into the mountains, and did not return that night, and when search was made for him next day he was found in a deserted Indian camp, on his knees leaning against the side of the camp, where he had been murdered by the Indians. They had cut off one of his fingers and fled.[57]

The Cherokee "threat," as the Indians were now regarded, was ended in 1838 when the last of the cove's first citizens were removed for the "trail of tears" march to Oklahoma Territory. It is both sad and ironic that John Oliver was among the local militia charged with the final roundup of the remaining Indians.

In addition to the Olivers, Tiptons, and Jobes, three other individuals merit particular attention for their early contributions to building the new community. Richard and William Davis, brothers, were instrumental along with the Olivers in obtaining an independent Cades Cove Baptist Church, established as an arm of the Wear Cove Church on June 16, 1827. Richard served as moderator and William as clerk from

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[57] Ibid.

1827 until 1839, when both brothers moved to Walker County, Georgia.[58] The establishment of the first church in Cades Cove represented to the cove people their single most important accomplishment in building the new community. Following a pattern very characteristic of frontier education in Tennessee, William Davis also served as one of the first school teachers in the cove.[59]

The other individual who deserves particular attention in the early history of the cove was Peter Cable. Born in Pennsylvania on December 20, 1792, he bought land in Cades Cove as early as 1825.[60] Uncle Peter and Aunt Catherine, as he and his wife were affectionately called, "were leaders in church and community life and were honored and highly respected by both old and young." They were of Pennsylvania-Dutch stock, which probably accounts for Peter's leadership in technological skills and his widely acclaimed innovative genius. It was he who carefully designed and supervised the elaborate system of dikes, sluices, and log booms placed across the creeks, whereby the lower end of the cove was drained and transformed from an unusable swamp into the cove's richest farmland.[61] Both public and private buildings in the cove bore evidence of his building craft, and the farm tools which he invented will be described in a later chapter.

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[58]Burns, "Settlement and Early History," 60; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 10-13.

[59]Jobe, Autobiography, 15-16; Folmsbee and others, Tennessee, I, 232.

[60]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 23.

[61]Ibid., 24-25.

In 1830, Joshua Jobe moved to Georgia, attracted by the prospect of the Cherokee lands in the process of being vacated.[62] Most of the Tiptons left during the 1830's, along with many families who had been part of the 1821 Carter County migration into the cove.[63] Despite the cove's relative isolation, its population increased or diminished with the many internal shifts of population in the United States. The attraction of the Georgia lands of the Cherokee Nation during the 1830's, and later, the opening up of new territories in the West caused periodic fluctuations as older settlers left and new settlers entered the cove. In this sense, the cove became a way-station, even during the genesis of its community life during the 1820's, for the larger Westward Movement.[64]

These rapid shifts in population would enrich Cades Cove by the very diversity of new peoples arriving there. But the families who chose to make the cove their permanent home from the beginning actually built the community. They were the ones who built the schools, churches, mills, and roads, and who are buried in the quiet cemeteries which are

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[62] Jobe, Autobiography, 20.

[63] Ibid.; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 10; Burns, "Settlement and Early History," 62.

[64] J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 10. Former residents frequently maintained an active correspondence with their friends and relatives back in Cades Cove, and were often outspoken about the disadvantages as well as the advantages of their Western lands. For an excellent example, see Jacob and Ann Tipton, Newton County, Missouri, to John and Isaac Tipton, Cades Cove, August 16, 1847, in author's possession. The larger impact of the population fluctuation on the state of Tennessee, and the contributions of migrating Tennesseans to the nation, is acutely analyzed in Thomas Allan Scott, National Impact of Tennessee Through her Migrating Sons, 1830-1900 (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1966).

one of the few visible signs of their presence in the cove today.[65] John Oliver and Peter Cable, who remained the best of friends throughout their lives, contributed something more to the spiritual than to the material development of the cove, however. They gave the ideological base for developing a permanent sense of community, a complex system of ideas and values which would determine the quality of life in Cades Cove throughout the nineteenth century.

This range of attitudes and ideas were implicit, often intangible, and always difficult to document or measure, but any study of Cades Cove which does not take them into account makes a fundamental error in assuming that the community's character was predominantly determined by its geography or economic structure. The ideas and values of its early settlers provided the cove with an ideological modus operandi throughout the nineteenth century in the form of a flexible framework which could accommodate both new ideas and old disappointments. Other chapters will explore the roots of these ideas, and their manifestation, but the importance of Andrew Jackson's equalitarian ideology to John Oliver, and through him, to the larger community of Cades Cove, has already been duly noted.[66]

Certainly, however, a fundamental love of the land played a primary role in the formation of the new community. This intense attachment to their fertile land is nowhere explicitly recorded by the small farmers

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[65] J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 10.

[66] W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 1-4.

of Cades Cove, who in any event would be generally inarticulate about basic assumptions which they held in regard to the land. But evidence of such devotion is clearly demonstrated by the fact that they carefully named, as they would their children, each tiny subdivision, each field or small rising, within the cove. The creeks they named early: Anthony, Forge, Mill, Rowan's, and Abram's were the main ones. In addition, scores of smaller tributaries were named, of which Cades, Sea, Tater, Wildcat, and Whistling are but a few.[67] The important fact here is that even the smallest topographical features, significant trees and insignificant springs, were named with equally careful attention.

These place-names appear early in the land deeds, where they are frequently mentioned to mark boundaries.[68] But they represented an invisible map, a vast, detailed descriptive knowledge of Cades Cove with which all the inhabitants of the community were familiar, but which no outsider could begin to master until after long years of residence. Once named, these smaller geographic areas assumed an identity of their own, quite independent from the original owner, who might long since have died or moved out of the cove.[69] They almost assumed the

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[67]Interview with John W. Oliver, August 14, 1963.

[68]Blount Deeds, Book 5, pp. 345-46; Book 2, pp. 480-81; 503-504; 324.

[69]An excellent example of this practice is the Hyatt Lane, a main route across the cove. The Hyatt family, for whom the lane was named, was mentioned as having moved to Missouri during the 1840's by William B. Tipton in a letter to John Tipton in 1847. See William B. Tipton, Newton County, Missouri, to John Tipton, Cades Cove, August 16, 1847, in author's possession. See also Inez Burns, History of Blount County, Tennessee (Maryville, Tennessee, 1957), 275.

personalities of people; with the passage of time, each entity might develop a history of its own, describing the human events which had transpired at that particular location.[70]

So the land blended with the people who settled it into one functional unity, and this unity represented in its best sense a community. Binding the people together was this pool of shared knowledge, this internal, invisible map, with all the accompanying folklore, which they shared with no outsider.[71] This intimate knowledge and familiarity with the land also preserved the sense of community by providing Cades Cove with an unchanging constant when the great migrations, into and out of the cove, began in the early 1830's. And it gave the first settlers a clear advantage, because such knowledge, and through such knowledge, full participation in the community's conscious life, could be acquired and perfected by cove residents only through the passage of time.

The settlement period had scarcely ended in 1827 when the cove was introduced to the industrial age with the construction on Forge Creek of the Cades Cove Bloomary Forge, built and operated by Daniel D. Foute, the cove's single most important entrepreneur during the nineteenth

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[70] Interview with John W. Oliver, August 14, 1963. The importance of place traditions connected with landmarks is succinctly discussed by Richard M. Dorson, American Folklore and the Historian (Chicago, 1971), 155.

[71] Ibid. For an interesting analysis of the functional value of place-names, see Ronald L. Baker, "The Role of Folk Legends in Place-Name Research," Journal of American Folklore, LXXXV (October-December, 1972), 367-73.

century.[72] According to tradition, the noise which resounded throughout the cove from the first blow of the huge forge hammer proved to be too much for the wolves. Unable to cope with this noise, the frightened animals left that day, and were never seen or heard in Cades Cove again.[73] To John and Lucretia Oliver, the departure of these wolves represented the welcome knowledge that a dangerous and often threatening symbol of their wilderness experience had finally ended. But to the remnant Cherokee Indians still living in the cove, the wolf (wa'ya) was revered as a hunter and watchdog; the ordinary Cherokee would never kill a wolf if he could possibly avoid it.[74]

To these remaining Cherokee, then, the departure of the wolves foreshadowed a time in the immediate future when they, too, would be banished forever from their homes in the cove. In the very genesis of the new community were implanted seeds of destruction for the older Cherokee civilization. How the Cherokee living there regarded this fate is undiscoverable, but it is reasonable to assume that they loved their fertile cove land no less than did the people who displaced them. Yet they were unquestionable trapped in an impossible situation; regardless of their behavior, whether they kept the lone Oliver family from

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[72] J. P. Lesley, Iron Manufacturer's Guide (Philadelphia, 1859), 202. Lesley states in 1859 that the Cades Cove Bloomary Forge was located ten miles south of the Amerine Forge, and was abandoned in 1847. Signs of coaling and excavation are still visible there today. See Burns, Blount County, 60.

[73] Interview with John W. Oliver, July 18, 1963.

[74] Mooney, "Myths of the Cherokee," 264-65.

starvation in the winter of 1818-1819, or murdered Joshua Jobe's brother in an abandoned Indian camp later, their fate was as inexorably fixed, or predetermined, as that of their fellow hunter, the wolves.

For the pioneering white families, however, the decade of the 1820's had brought prosperity and a sense of permanence to their newly established community as they cleared their fields, planted orchards, drained swamps, and established schools and churches. They were still an island of settled land within the surrounding wilderness of the Great Smoky Mountains, and the larger problems of finding routes out of the cove for their marketable crops were yet unsolved. But families such as the Olivers looked forward to the future growth of the cove in 1830, confident that no problem would ever again arise which threatened their survival as had starvation in the winter of 1818-1819. Nor would they ever again face such difficulties alone; the growing security of the community within the cove seemed to counterbalance any possible danger from the surrounding mountains outside.

CHAPTER II

THE IMPACT OF THE WILDERNESS

Recalling his appointment to the Maryville circuit sixty-four years earlier, Isaac P. Martin, a Methodist minister in the Holston Conference for over half a century, gave the following account of his first visit to Cades Cove in 1890:

> The sun was high in the heavens when I passed the crest of the mountain and began the descent toward Cade's Cove. My first glimpse of the Cove was through openings in the forest, but presently I came to a cliff from which I could see almost the entire cove which nestles there among the crests of the great mountains. I had never seen anything quite so beautiful. Thunderhead Mountain, standing 5530 feet, rose to the southeast, rising nearly 3000 feet above the level of Cade's Cove.
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> On the shoulder of Thunderhead nestled Spence Field, forever attesting man's desire to dwell on the lofty heights. A little further away to the southwest was Gregory's Bald with its parklike trees and its meadows in the sunlight. To the north was Rich Mountain, which I had just crossed; with Abram's Creek rising in the northeast and running obliquely northwest to spill its waters at the picturesque Abram's Falls, Cade's Cove is the dream of the Smoky Mountains.[1]

Martin's description of Cades Cove is significant not because of its uniqueness; few visitors during the nineteenth century failed to comment favorably, often using superlatives, on the natural beauty of the cove and its environs. It did not require the skill of Mary Noailles Murfree or Sidney Lanier, both of whom used Cades Cove as the background for many of their writings, to awaken the ordinary person's sensibilities

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[1] Isaac P. Martin, A Minister in the Tennessee Valley: Sixty-Seven Years (Nashville, 1954), 65.

to the extraordinary beauty of the cove.[2] Even Parson Brownlow, the vituperative editor of the Knoxville Whig, whose sharp gaze seldom failed to uncover the most minute flaw in human or natural phenomena, had only praise for the cove and its surrounding mountains.[3]

Martin's description of Cades Cove is significant because it indicates the primacy and permanence of the wilderness setting of the cove in 1890, three years before Frederick Jackson Turner lamented the passing of the frontier experience for the rest of the nation.[4] Cades Cove in this respect was certainly an anomaly. Other sections in the United States, once settled, soon lost the flavor of their original wilderness environment as farms were surrounded by more cleared lands in the forward progression of the Westward Movement. Yet however intensely cultivated the fertile basin of the cove might become, the surrounding mountains, and vast stretches of wilderness areas, remained a constant factor, an ever-present element, in the lives of the cove people throughout the nineteenth century. The purpose of this chapter

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[2]Nathalia Wright, "Montvale Springs under the Proprietorship of Sterling Lanier, 1857-1863," ETHS Publications, No. 19 (1947), 59; Mason, Lure of the Great Smokies, 11.

[3]Knoxville Whig, August 27, February 5, 1853, January 3, 1857. William G. Brownlow, editor of the Knoxville Whig from the time of his removal from Jonesboro to Knoxville in 1849 until the Civil War, was "without question the most regular and ardent patron" of Montvale Springs. From this resort he visited the surrounding mountains and coves, and wrote frequent and glowing accounts of the area in his newspaper. Wright, "Montvale Springs," 54-55. See also the Knoxville Whig, 1850-1860 passim.

[4]Ray Allen Billington, Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher (New York, 1973), 184-90; Frederick Jackson Turner, The Frontier in American History (New York, 1920), 1-38.

is to explore the function of the wilderness—those unoccupied mountain areas outside the cove proper—in the lives of the people living in Cades Cove.[5]

The inseparability of the physical wilderness and the geographic area of Cades Cove, and the continuing interaction of their lives in the densely settled cove with the wilderness outside does not necessarily mean that the attitudes of the cove people toward their environment did not change or alter during the course of the century. An examination of the records of the people actually living in the cove, who were full participants in its community life, can provide answers to the important questions of their attitudes toward and the functional value of the wilderness. Later visitors and writers, seeing the natural setting of Cades Cove, often made quite erroneous assumptions about the importance of the wilderness in the lives of the natives.

One might assume, for example, that the wilderness impeded the development of an organized society and retarded agricultural practices and the development of a market economy in the cove. A recent student of an area with many similarities in West Virginia concluded that the very means which the pioneers were able to devise in order to survive in

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[5]This simple definition of wilderness, a far cry from the modern scholar's sophisticated concept, reflects the contemporary residents' idea of the uninhabited mountainous regions surrounding them. W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 26-27. Roderick Nash has pointed out that the main appeal of the wilderness has always been to those most removed from it, the gentry intellectuals who desire to conceptualize nature, not to the pioneers who exploited it. "American frontiersmen," he concludes, "rarely judged wilderness with criteria other than the utilitarian." Roderick Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind (New Haven, 1967), 23-43.

an inhospitable mountain region added to the geographic isolation of the area and eventually created a base of arrested development which left the entire area far behind the rest of the state and nation.[6]

On first observation, this same situation might have occurred in Cades Cove, because the cove suffered a serious retrogression after the Civil War and had become increasingly the stereotyped static society of Southern Appalachia by the end of the century. Yet the whole situation was very different in the cove. First, the rich soil of the cove basin, unlike the poorer soil in West Virginia, allowed farmers to produce an abundance of marketable crops. Economic decline came not because their land could no longer produce, but because the market demand seriously declined after the Civil War, due to the generally depressed economy of East Tennessee and the larger region.[7] Second, the constant influx of new settlers into Cades Cove, often from distant places, abruptly stopped after 1860.[8]

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[6]Otis K. Rice, The Allegheny Frontier: West Virginia Beginnings, 1730-1830 (Lexington, 1970), 376-79.

[7]Folmsbee and others, Tennessee, II, 97, 129. That Tennessee agriculture remained depressed through most of the period between 1865 and 1900 is illustrated by the fact that in 1890 the average value of farm lands per acre in the state was still 93 cents below the 1860 level, and the total value of Tennessee's farm products in 1890 was 36 percent below that of 1870. U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900: Agriculture, Part I, 694-95, 703. These census statistics reveal not only a drastic drop in Tennessee's farm property and products after 1860, but also a decline between 1870-1890.

[8]Even a cursory comparison of the 1870 and 1880 census returns of Blount County with pre-war returns indicates that the steady influx of new settlers abruptly stopped after 1860. These demographic changes will be analyzed more thoroughly in Chapter III, but the loss of new settlers, and the subsequent lack of diversity among the cove population, obviously had a very deleterious effect on the entire fabric of community life.

Thus the general economic decline after the Civil War was due to political and external factors and not to the isolation of the cove or the effect of the wilderness on the lives of the cove people. During the 1840's and 1850's, new roads and frequent commerce with the market centers of East Tennessee, as well as many new immigrants, had made the cove a prosperous and progressive agricultural community.[9] Its decline after the Civil War was relative to the general decline of the entire region; the 1880 census, for example, illustrated the fact that the sixteenth civil district of Blount County (Cades Cove) was no less, and often more prosperous, than other more accessible areas of the county, although the entire county and region were still below prewar levels.[10]

Given a spatial definition of wilderness, what were the physical characteristics of this surrounding area of forests and mountains which today comprise the Great Smoky Mountains National Park? This southern section of the Unaka Chain is characterized by an amazing variety of flora and fauna, a variety due in part to wisps of fog and low-hanging clouds which make these mountains the nation's region of highest precipitation outside the Pacific Northwest. From the Frazier fir, or "balsam," which accounts for the bulk of forests in mountains over 6,000 feet, to the cove hardwood forests, the variety and size of more than

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[9] W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 19-20; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 5-6; Burns, Blount County, 276.

[10] 1880 Census, Population, Blount County.

one hundred native trees in the area gives this region a botanical variety unmatched elsewhere in the United States.[11]

From this array of natural bounty would come great economic benefit to the inhabitants of Cades Cove. One tree, the chestnut, which is now extinct, played an important role in the ecological system affecting both wildlife, domesticated animals, and human residents of the area.[12] "The big tree of the Great Smokies forests," with some specimens achieving trunk diameters of nine to ten feet, the chestnut was regarded as the best hardwood tree in America because "its lumber was straight grained, easily worked, exceptionally durable, and of the highest quality."[13] The nuts were sweet and palatable, and formed a staple and highly desirable part of the average pioneer's diet. They were also a very

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[11]Arthur Stupka, Great Smoky Mountains National Park (Washington, D. C., 1960), 1-15.

[12]A parasitic fungus, first discovered in New York in 1904, rapidly spread throughout the forests of the eastern United States, and during the 1920's and 1930's, killed most of the chestnut trees in the Great Smoky Mountains. Frank W. Woods, Natural Replacement of Chestnut by Other Species in the Great Smoky Mountains (Doctoral dissertation, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1957), 2-4. The causal fungus, Endothia parasitica, has practically eliminated the American chestnut (Castanea dentata) as a member of the deciduous forest complex of the eastern United States, and oriental species and hybrids are not satisfactory replacements. The importance of the chestnut in the cove areas, and of the chestnut to other types of trees, suggests that the post-blight forests will be considerably different in composition from those same areas in the nineteenth century. See also Paul Edward Barnett, A Comparative Study of Phenolics in Chestnut (Castanea), and Their Relationships with Resistance to Endothia parasitica (Doctoral dissertation, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1972), 116-20.

[13]Stupka, Great Smoky Mountains, 23-36. Chestnut was widely used in early America for kitchen utensils, bowls, boxes, and ware that had hard usage. Mary Earle Gould, Early American Wooden Ware and Other Kitchen Utensils (Rutland, Vermont, 1962), 27.

marketable by-product, and each fall children in the cove collected chestnuts to sell in the larger urban markets of East Tennessee, usually Maryville or Knoxville.[14] Needless to say, the extinction of this fine tree seriously diminished many species of wildlife, particularly black bears, who fed directly on the nuts.[15]

A seemingly endless supply of trees from the surrounding mountains supplied the cove people with wood for houses, fence rails, and a great variety of household implements and agricultural tools. This form of the wilderness, the trees, had a very conditioning effect on the domestic economy of the cove, since some division of labor—i.e., coffin-maker, cabinet maker, etc.,—was very early necessary to utilize this basic

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[14]Chestnuts also furnished mast for hogs which grazed in the woods. J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 5. A common sight on the streets of Knoxville and most other eastern cities during the last century was the chestnut vendor, who sold roasted chestnuts for a nickel a bag. Aside from its sentimental appeal to the nation, the chestnut had high commercial value because of its durable and rot-resistant wood. It was also an important source of tannic acid. Amanda Ulm, "Remember the Chestnut," Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution, 1948 (Washington, 1948), 377-82.

[15]Stupka, Great Smoky Mountains, 26. The extinction of the chestnut and the consequent diminution of animals such as the black bear, which depended on chestnuts for food, helps explain some basic ecological changes between the wilderness environment of nineteenth and twentieth century Cades Cove. A survey of the Southern Appalachian forests in 1905 revealed the following proportion of trees in the Cades Cove district: chestnut, 30 percent; chestnut oak, 20 percent; hemlock, 12 percent; sugar maple, 6 percent; red gum, 4 percent; black birch, 4 percent; black oak, 6 percent; and others, 6 percent. The percentage of chestnut (30 percent) in the Cades Cove district was considerably higher than regional averages (20 percent) in the Little Tennessee River basin. So at the end of the century the chestnut was clearly the most important tree in Cades Cove quantitatively, and its distribution was much greater there than in the larger region. H. B. Ayres and W. W. Ashe, "The Southern Appalachian Forests," U. S. Geological Survey Professional Paper No. 37 (Washington, 1905), 177-81.

commodity. It also bound together the ties of community, since a large undertaking such as building a house or barn, invariably required a collective effort. And socially, the abundance and free access to wood had a leveling effect, since the poorest family had only to gather it in order to have a fuel supply equal to that of its richest neighbor.[16]

Another practical function of the wilderness was to supply an abundance of many types of game. Here, as with the forests, it is important to bear in mind that in the mountains surrounding Cades Cove, game remained constant as a food source throughout the century and did not, as was so often the case in other areas, become scarce or thinned out with the influx of new settlers. One reason for this situation was that the surrounding mountains and wilderness areas were never actually settled, or only very sparcely so in remote regions.[17]

As a food source, by far the most important game was deer. William Howell Oliver recalled in his Sketches that his father, Elijah, was an excellent hunter who could average three to six deer in a good day. Killing deer involved minimal waste, inasmuch as the meat was salted and could be preserved for fairly long periods of time. Elijah Oliver often refused to kill smaller game because deer was such an excellent quarry, and firing one's rifle at a squirrel might scare the more valuable deer

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[16]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 51-58; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 24.

[17]Commenting on agriculture in the Little Tennessee River basin, Ayres and Ashe stated in 1905 that "all of the land available for tillage has been cleared," and that outside of a few alluvial bottoms and fertile coves, this area contained "some of the most rugged land in the Southern Appalachians," completely unsuitable for cultivation. Ayres and Ashe, "Southern Appalachian Forests," 180.

away.[18] Venison remained abundant throughout most of the century and was always a favorite diet of the cove people.

In the beginning of settlement, hunting was a practical necessity, since game supplied an important part of the total food supply. As farms began to produce an abundance of various types of crops, however, killing game became less a necessity than a leisure pastime, or sport, for the men of the cove. Hunting became a ritual, usually solitary; most cove men preferred to hunt alone to escape, if only temporarily, from the intensive effort required in farming and from any personal or domestic crisis. Thus through this ritual the wilderness became a type of psychic safety valve for the men of the community.[19]

Hunting was a complicated activity. It required not only an accurate knowledge of the geography of the mountains, but the ability to determine weather conditions, to track game, and to build simple traps if one should run out of ammunition. In the process, or course of this ritual, an individual hunter frequently developed an intense fondness for his gun, illustrated by the fact that favorite guns were frequently given names such as "Old Bean," or "Old Betsy," and the cove men could often identify various guns by the sound of their discharge.[20]

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[18] W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 33.

[19] Ibid., 26; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 8-9.

[20] J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 9. The esteem in which individual guns were held by cove hunters is demonstrated by the fact that many of these flintlocks survived with reputations intact into the twentieth century. An example was "Old Betsy," the gun of "Uncle" George Powell. This Baxter Bean gun was "a splendid example of the Old Smoky flintlock." Powell was particularly fond of a certain kind of "grease" flint, which gave off a particularly bright spark. These flints were found in

The transmission of this knowledge of how to survive in the wilderness formed an important part of the folk, or informal education passed from father to son. Manual skills such as how to build fires or traps, skin wild animals, and use firearms tended to be male prerogatives with only rare exceptions. It occasionally represented the rites of passage from adolescence to adulthood, but was usually a gradual and cumulative learning process begun in early childhood.[21] The individual experience of going alone into the mountains provided a strong if inarticulate bond between father, son, and grandson. The transmission of such skills also provided a continuing guarantee that in any emergency, a son alone in the wilderness would not be at a loss in knowing how to survive, protect, and feed himself.[22]

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plentiful quantities near the old "Equanulty" (Ekanetelee) Trace, and "were much sought after by Uncle George's neighbors, the Cherokees, in the famous days of old Junialuska and Younaguska (Drowning Bear)." Mason, Lure of the Great Smokies, 141-57.

[21] Interview with John W. Oliver, July 19, 1963; W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 22-23.

[22] Ibid. Skill in hunting was also due to the skill of the individual gunmaker in the cove throughout the century. Mason argued that "the very fact that the Southern mountain frontier gunsmith and marksman could manufacture, at his crude forge, with its scanty, home-made quipment, a short-range firearm of comparatively unvarying accuracy and hard-hitting qualities, is extraordinary, and no feat to rival it is found anywhere in history. It seems all the more remarkable when one is thoroughly conversant with the circumstances of his environment and his lack of scientific tools." The flintlock rifle gradually gave way to the "store-bought" barrel and rough-cast mountings for which the gunmaker paid twelve dollars. Later the more modern percussion cap-lock became widely used in the cove. "When the store-bought gun could be purchased in rough-cast form more readily by the mountain gunmakers, guncraftsmen sprang up like grasshoppers in every mountain cove and cabin, and the oldtime armorer, who proudly placed his name-plate in silver in the barrel of his brain-child, stored his headblock and screw-guide away

Thus hunting, first a necessity during the settlement period, gradually in the three decades after 1830 became a ritual carefully transmitted to the younger sons of Cades Cove. Because of this transmission, most of the cove people were able to survive the devastation of the Civil War. In the geographical center of a Confederate South, East Tennessee remained staunchly Union in sympathy, an isolated island in hostile rebel territory on all sides. The Confederates, regarding East Tennesseans as traitors, unleashed guerrilla warfare against the civilian population. Periodic raids by North Carolinians, often little better than marauding outlaws, stripped the cove people time and again of their cumulated supplies of food, as well as their livestock and seed corn.[23]

These North Carolina raiders, who had easy access to the cove through Ekanetelee and other gaps, were not unaware of the various types of food the natives raised, nor of where such supplies were usually stored around their homesteads. It was not unusual for them to take food, often the last bite, from the table and strip the inhabitants of their best clothes and shoes or boots. Thus during the darkest days of the Civil War, when all food supplies and domestic animals had been

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forever. His trade was gone, but not his reputation, for he had forged a republic at his backwoods anvil." Mason, Lure of the Great Smokies, 148-59.

[23]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 24-27. Cades Cove was the scene of more guerrilla raids than any other area of Blount County, probably because of its accessibility to North Carolina. Burns, Blount County, 65.

stolen, the wilderness once again provided subsistence for the people of Cades Cove, as it had during the early years of settlement.[24]

During the war years, Elijah Oliver supplied his family with food by trapping many types of smaller animals, since powder for his gun was often difficult to obtain. William Howell, his son, recalled that his father made a very simple type of trap, which they called a "fall," whereby squirrels were baited into a small pit with a few grains of corn.[25] After deer, squirrels and rabbits were probably the most important food source with an occasional wild turkey, if the hunter was particularly skillful and lucky. Bears were often hunted for sport, because they provided something of a challenge, and many cove people prized bear meat. Various by-products from the bear, notably grease or oil, were thought to be efficacious for a wide variety of maladies.[26]

The disadvantages of an abundance of game was the corresponding plentitude of predatory animals. Opposums, foxes, and weasels posed a constant threat to chickens, ducks, and other domestic fowl in the cove. Bears slaughtered cattle on the open range and often made forages into the cove for hogs and sheep. Every fall raids would be expected from the bears, lured into the cultivated areas by ripening corn. Often

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[24]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 24-27. Because these North Carolina raiders lived in an environment very similar to that of Cades Cove, it required the greatest ingenuity on the part of the cove people to hide any of their food or livestock. Moreover, frequent pre-war commerce with North Carolina meant that many of these raiders knew specific geographic details about the cove and its environs.

[25]Ibid., 34-35.

[26]Ibid., 54.

farmers would lie camouflaged in the fields during the harvest season to protect their corn crop against these marauders.[27]

Wolves, although they disappeared from the cove at an early date, continued to be a problem to various animals grazing in the mountains. They were always much more numerous on the North Carolina side of the Great Smokies, because this wilderness area was less densely populated. Nevertheless, cove hunters ranged these mountains in search of wolves until the Civil War. The state of Tennessee had declared a bounty on them in 1812, and by the 1830's, three dollars per scalp was the going payment. Between 1834 and 1840, the Blount County records show payment for wolf scalps to three cove men. During the Civil War, the wolves greatly increased because fewer men were available to hunt them. After the war, the herders banded together in a concentrated effort to thin out the wolf population and succeeded in exterminating them in all but the most remote areas of the Great Smoky Mountains.[28]

The wilderness also provided a wide variety of plants, or herbs, highly valued by the cove people for their medicinal properties. Using

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[27]Interview with John W. Oliver, July 19, 1963.

[28]Scalps were presented to the County Court, whereupon the clerk of the court issued a voucher collectable from the state treasurer. Robert Burchfield, John Jones, and James M. Shields of Cades Cove were paid for a total of seven scalps in the 1830's. Blount Minutes, 1834-1840 passim. John Preston Arthur related that hunters often sought wolves for their bounty in Western North Carolina. They would follow the gaunt mother wolf to her den and kill her litter, which usually numbered six to ten pups. For each scalp, hunters received $2.50, regardless of the animal's size. By killing only the pups and allowing the mother wolves to escape, they assured another year's litter. John Preston Arthur, Western North Carolina: A History (Raleigh, 1914), 523.

such published references as Dr. Gunn's Domestic Medicine, as well as their own family recipes, most households in the cove practiced some form of folk or home remedy for various diseases. Because the herbs were available to anyone, as well as the knowledge of how to use them, no single person, or "medicine man," evolved in the cove to monopolize such cures. And since doctors, such as were available, were usually located in distant towns like Maryville or Knoxville and were often prohibitively expensive, the use of herbal medicines served a valuable social end.[29]

The North American variety of ginseng, Panax quinquefolium, grew abundantly in the Great Smoky Mountains and in an economy starved for specie furnished a money crop greater than the chestnut.[30] Ginseng had early played an important role in the American trade with China, where the roots of the plant had long been valued as a cure for many ills and informities and was in great demand because of the popular belief there that it was an aphrodisiac.[31]

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[29]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 39; John C. Gunn, Gunn's Domestic Medicine (Knoxville, 1830). The enormous popularity of this work is reflected in its numerous editions: second edition, 1834, Madisonville, Tennessee; third edition, 1839, Pumpkintown, Tennessee. These subsequent editions were altered very little, and Gunn's publisher claimed in the preface of his new book (1857) that one hundred thousand copies of the older work had been printed in a short time. In 1857 Gunn greatly enlarged and revised the older work into Gunn's New Domestic Physician, containing 1,046 pages. This second enlarged work received wide critical acclaim. John C. Gunn, Gunn's New Domestic Physician (3rd ed., Cincinnati, 1860), i, 1047-48.

[30]William O. Douglas, "The People of Cades Cove," National Geographic, CXXII (July, 1962), 85.

[31]Sydney and Marjorie Barstow Greenbie, Gold of Ophir: The China Trade in the Making of America (New York, 1937), 32-37, 84-86, 151. The

André Michaux described in 1802 the abundance of the plant in the mountains of Tennessee and Kentucky, and the method of preparation for sale:

> It grows in the declivities of mountains, in fresh and constantly shaded spots, where the soil is richest. A man can scarcely draw in one day more than eight or nine pounds of fresh roots, which are always less than an inch in diameter, even after fifteen years growth, if the number of impressions may be relied on that may be observed on the upper part of the neck of the root, and which are produced by the stalks that annually succeed. The form of the root is generally elliptic; and when it is bifurcated, which is not often, one of the divisions is much thicker and longer than the other. The seeds, which are of a striking red colour, and attached together, come to maturity between the 15th September and the 1st October.
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> In the United States . . . they begin to collect it in spring, and stop at the commencement of winter. Its root, which is then soft and watery, grows wrinkled by desiccation, but afterwards becomes extremely hard, and at length loses a third of its bulk, and nearly half of its weight.[32]

These same methods of recognizing the plant and preparing the roots for sale were used by the cove people. Dr. Gunn stated in 1830 that ginseng "is found in great plenty among the hills and mountains of Tennessee, and brought into Knoxville daily for sale."[33] The price paid to collectors varied. In 1802, Michaux said that merchants in

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sailing in 1784 of the Empress of China from New York with a cargo of ginseng has become a standard detail in practically every survey of American history.

[32]F. A. Michaux, Travels to the Westward of the Allegany Mountains to the States of Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee in the Year 1802, trans. from the French (London, 1805), 71-72.

[33]Gunn, Domestic Medicine (1830), 369.

Philadelphis paid six or seven dollars per pound.[34] Dr. Gunn later indicated that an occasional glut of the market brought the price down.[35] But the continuing demand of the China market made "sang," as the mountain people called it, a profitable by-product throughout the century.[36]

The wiser ginseng collectors replanted the bright red seeds when they dug up the roots in order to insure another year's crop. Although many cove people engaged in "sangin," or gathering ginseng roots to sell in Knoxville, there is no evidence that they ever used the herb in any home remedy or were even cognizant of its reputed properties. They seem to have agreed completely with Dr. Gunn's conclusion that:

> The Ginseng has been fully tested by the best physicians in the United States, and they ascribe to it nothing more than its being a pleasant bitter, and a gentle stimulant for strengthening the stomach.[37]

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[34]Michaux, Travels, 72. Market prices do not, of course, furnish any indication of what the individual collectors were paid. But the fact that the cove people continued to gather ginseng throughout the century, and considered it a "money" crop, indicated that the price they received seemed worth the effort.

[35]Gunn, Domestic Medicine (1830), 369.

[36]The average price per pound of ginseng rose steadily throughout the nineteenth century from .42 in 1822; .71 in 1841; .84 in 1861; 1.04 in 1871; 1.65 in 1881; 3.39 in 1891; 5.38 in 1901. So ginseng was one of the very few products whose value continued to rise in the post-Civil War period. Val Hardacre, Woodland Nuggets of Gold: The Story of American Ginseng Cultivation (New York, 1968), 298.

[37]Gunn, Domestic Medicine (1830), 369. In the revised 1860 edition, Dr. Gunn had changed his mind. Here he stated that ginseng was "useful in nervous debility, weak digestion and feeble appetite, as a stomachic and restorative. It is considered a very valuable medicine for children; and has been recommended in asthma, palsy and nervous affections generally." Gunn, New Domestic Physician (1860), 796. There is no

Another wilderness product was the various animal furs which also commanded excellent cash prices throughout the nineteenth century. Mink and muskrats along Abram's Creek were trapped, as were foxes, opposums, and racoons in the mountains. Very few instances are recorded of trapping as being the single occupation of any individual in the cove. Rather, it was a widely practiced pastime to gain extra cash, engaged in by most of the cove farmers during the winter months after their crops had been harvested. Trap lines were laid in the usual fashion, and revenues from these furs remained a steady, if not excessive, source of income. Even after the Civil War, when regional markets were depressed, the demand for furs remained constant, because the system was supplying an international market.[38]

In the mountains surrounding Cades Cove are a number of open areas which grow excellent grasses and are known as balds, because no trees

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evidence, however, that the cove people used ginseng themselves, even after 1900. See Douglas, "The People of Cades Cove," 85.

[38]The trapping of animals and exporting of fur skins to Europe comprised most of the fur business in the United States until 1900. Victor R. Fuchs, The Economics of the Fur Industry (New York, 1957), 4. There is no evidence that deerskins were ever exported in great numbers from the cove, although these hides had earlier furnished the bulk of the trade on the colonial Southern frontier. Verner W. Crane, The Southern Frontier, 1670-1732 (Ann Arbor, 1929), 111. There are two explanations for this decline. First, commercial restrictions growing out of the Napoleonic wars closed the European market after 1800. Prices declined so drastically that the Cherokee factory at Hiwassee was discontinued in 1810. Second, after the War of 1812, government policy discouraged any subsidy for fur trading, since it was believed to impede the agricultural development of the Southern Indians. Because such a policy would also add to the economic pressure on the Indians to remove to the West, the governors of Georgia and Tennessee readily concurred. Paul Christler Phillips, The Fur Trade (2 vols., Norman, 1961), II, 78-80. By the 1830's, cow hides had largely replaced deerskins in the domestic tannery industry.

grow on them. Spence Field, located on the state-line ridge, and domelike Gregory's Bald, which rises 3,000 feet above the cove in the southwest, are the two major balds, although there are a number of smaller ones, such as Parson's, immediately accessible through the cove.[39] Very early in their history the cove people used these grassy uplands to graze their cattle during the summer months. Both cattle, and later, sheep, could graze in these highlands throughout the summer months, leaving the cove land available for growing whatever crops were necessary.[40]

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[39]The origin of these balds has long been something of a scientific mystery. The two best summaries of the problem are V. C. Gilbert, Jr., Vegetation of the Grassy Balds of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1954), and A. F. Mark, An Ecological Study of the Grass Balds of the Southern Appalachian Mountains (Doctoral dissertation, Duke University, Durham, N. C., 1958). The records of Cades Cove indicate clearly that these balds were not "natural." J. W. Oliver stated that James Spence burned trees and cleared the Spence Field in the 1830's. Other sources from Cades Cove indicate the presence of large stumps earlier in the century, an indication of a prior forest cover. Yet the presence of some of these balds is recorded in Cherokee Indian legend before white settlement. Gilbert, Vegetation of The Grassy Balds, 15-16. The most recent scientific study of the balds indicates that the forest cover is rapidly returning. The rapidity of the invasion rate by various trees might indicate that the balds were never natural (as the cove residents maintained), and were kept cleared by fires and heavy grazing. Or the return of trees could be due to a warming of the climate. So there remains much conflicting evidence; no single theory explains whether or why the balds are or were natural. Mary Ellen Bruhn, Vegetational Succession on Three Grassy Balds of the Great Smoky Mountains (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1964), 40-51.

[40]"According to Mr. John W. Oliver, cattle, horses, sheep, and hogs were all grazed on the grassy balds. The sheep, hogs, and horses usually grazed near the top, and the cows around the edges. He said that where there were many sheep the cows would not graze. 'They did not like the scent.'" Gilbert, Vegetation of the Grassy Balds, 22-23.

These uplands proved to be such excellent grazing areas that many farmers in the neighboring counties of East Tennessee early began to herd their cattle and bring them here, usually through Cades Cove, during the summer months. One such Knox countian, Samuel McCammon, left a diary of his grazing activities between 1846 and 1854. In the middle of April with his herd he "set out for the top of the mountain;" in August he returned to the mountains, collected his cattle, and herded them home. This was the usual practice throughout much of the nineteenth century: the farmer could either sell his cattle to a buyer already in the mountains, or bring them back to one of the larger market centers of East Tennessee, usually Knoxville, and sell them there.[41]

Either way, the people of Cades Cove prospered from these various transactions. First, owners of the mountain land usually charged some rent, however nominal, per head of cattle for the use of these meadows. Second, a herder was often employed from among the cove people to keep watch over the animals while they grazed during the summer months. And in addition to fees spent on the cattle, farmers from other areas, as McCammon indicated in his diary, had to pay for lodging and feed for

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[41]The routine problems of herding are succinctly outlined in McCammon's diary. Occasionally, cattle were lost, despite the fact that they were carefully "belled" before leaving Knox County. Usually he decided on the various herders according to whether he thought that their ranges were good. Snow killed some of his cattle in April, 1847. In 1848, there was trouble about a new North Carolina law, so he took his cattle up the Little Tennessee River. The most frequent problem was the difficulty in rounding up their cattle in August, since some of the herd often became quite "wild" in the mountains. Diary of Samuel McCammon, 1846-1854 (McClung Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tennessee), passim.

their horses en route.[42] So the wilderness provided the people of Cades Cove with an excellent, accessible range to graze their own cattle and also with paying customers who used these highlands to graze cattle on a commercial basis.

Any enumeration of the practical functions of the wilderness to the cove people would be incomplete without mentioning the protection which the surrounding areas afforded during the Civil War. But the wilderness in this capacity was something of a mixed blessing. The surrounding mountains gave the cove people many excellent hiding places to keep their horses and more valuable farm animals if they received advanced warning, and during the worst years of the war, the cove men themselves frequently hid out in the mountains to avoid impressment into the Southern armies. But the easy access to Cades Cove from Ekanetelee Gap and other trails to North Carolina made some surprise guerrilla warfare inevitable, and often such attacks could be launched from the surrounding mountains without any prior warning. Also, the very location of Cades Cove in the heart of the Great Smoky Mountains made aid or assistance from other units of the Blount County home guard difficult to obtain.[43]

Although any exhaustive enumeration of the practical functions and uses of the wilderness surrounding the cove is impossible, certain definite themes emerge from the brief survey thus far. It is evident

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[42] Ibid. Ace Sparks, a resident of the cove, said that his father, Nath, grazed as many as 700 head of cattle on Spence Field during the 1890's. Gilbert, Vegetation of the Grassy Balds, 22.

[43] W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 21-23; Burns, Blount County, 64-65.

that the wilderness through its various products provided the cove people with a steady supplement to their income in addition to the livelihood they gained from farming. This seemingly inexhaustible abundance conditioned the inhabitants to patterns of waste and excessive consumption in the use of these wilderness products, although they might be quite frugal with their cultivated crops.[44] Without any effort at conservation, did not the cove people incur the risk, sooner or later, of running out of some or all of these wilderness products, as happened so often to settlers in other sections after the passing of the frontier era?

The answer to this question of conservation, and to more basic questions about the ecology of the land, are supplied by the geography of Cades Cove. Situated as a virtual island of cultivated land in the middle of the mountains, the cove proper reached its peak population of 671 people in 1850, a level which had declined by 1860 and was not reached again during the nineteenth century.[45] Thus, despite their excessive consuption, the limited quantity of arable land prevented the native population from rising above a fixed level. Game remained abundant, because the wilderness area surrounding the cove was large enough to resupply whatever was taken out with upsetting the ecological balance.[46]

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[44]Douglas, "People of Cades Cove," 86-89; W. H. Oliver Sketches, 19-20.

[45]1850 Census, Population, Blount County; 1860 Census, Population, Blount County.

[46]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 33-34; Ayres and Ashe, "Southern Appalachian Forests," 177.

In view of the many products and benefits from the wilderness, it seems evident that their mountain environment must have determined, to a great extent, the life style of the cove people. A careful chronological examination of their development, however, reveals that this was not true. The best illustration of the primacy of external influences on their life style is to be found in their architecture. Although many cabins have been preserved by the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, other buildings more indicative of chronological developments were destroyed. All frame houses, for instance were eliminated because the park wished to preserve only structures reflecting "pioneer" style.[47]

A careful comparison of both design and construction of these extant cabins with similar structures in other areas reveals no deviation from standard American building norms. In his comprehensive study of Southern Mountain cabins, Henry Glassie defines a cabin as "a one room house not over one and one-half stories high." He identifies two basic types of cabins: the square and the rectangular.[48] Both the John Oliver cabin and the Peter Cable cabin, the two oldest structures in the cove, built in the 1820's, clearly fall within Glassie's specifications in terms of height, type of roof, placement of chimneys and doors, construction, chimneys, fenestration, underpinning, and construction of walls, additions, and porches. Other later structures, such as the

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[47]A. Randolph Shields, "Cades Cove in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, XXIV (Summer, 1965), 116.

[48]Henry H. Glassie, Southern Mountain Houses: A Study in American Folk Culture (Master's thesis, State University of New York at Oneonta, 1965), 145-59.

Carter Shields and LeQuire cabins, built in the 1830's and 1840's, likewise fall within these specifications as square cabins.[49] (See Figures 1-3.)

The point of this comparison is that such standard forms were indicative of the larger American culture. These patterns almost approached standardization as they moved down the Eastern seaboard, into the Piedmont, and westward. Nothing in the cove environment altered or disconnected any of these building patterns: not the wilderness, but the broader culture from which the cove people came, dominated how and in what shape they built their homes. Glassie emphasizes the influence of Pennsylvania Germans in various construction techniques.[50] In Cades Cove, Peter Cable, of Pennsylvania-Dutch extraction, was the acknowledged authority in all types of construction.[51]

The only architectural surprise in Cades Cove is Elijah Oliver's cabin, an interesting specimen of the formative dog trot house. Built in 1866, it has the prerequisite "two units of roughly equal size separated by an open 'hall,' or 'trot,' or 'passage,' with a chimney on each gable end." One division is higher than the other, giving the structure a split-level appearance. Both units were constructed at the

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[49]The LeQuire cabin is no longer extant, but an excellent photograph of it is found in Joseph S. Hall, Smoky Mountain Folks and Their Lore (Asheville, N. C., 1960), 71.

[50]Glassie, Southern Mountain Houses, 209.

[51]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 25. Pennsylvania Germans were commonly called Pennsylvania Dutch, a corruption of the German "deutsch," Henry Glassie, Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States (Philadelphia, 1968), 36.



FIGURE 1

JOHN OLIVER CABIN



FIGURE 2

PETER CABLE CABIN



FIGURE 3

CARTER SHIELDS CABIN

same time, and both divisions, or pens, were functional units of the house. (See Figure 4.) The dog trot house, common in other sections of the country, is only rarely found in the Southern Mountains, according to Glassie.[52] The presence of this type of cabin in Cades Cove is further evidence that even the exceptions in building patterns were derived not from any indigenous inspiration due to the wilderness, but from the larger culture.

Although all frame houses were destroyed by the National Park Service in the late 1930's, there is ample evidence to indicate that such construction was common by the 1850's. Daniel D. Foute, an early owner of Montvale Springs, moved to the cove in 1849 and built a frame house widely admired for its fine construction and landscaping.[53] After the Civil War, many of the cove people returned to the simpler type of log construction because of its cheapness and utility. By the 1880's, however, as some degree of prosperity returned, frame houses were once again evident. Both the Henry Whitehead house and the Oliver-Tipton house, built in the 1880's, furnish clear evidence of transitional styles. (See Figures 5-6.) Often owners of substantial log houses chose to weatherboard their homes in order to modernize them.[54] The two periods, or cycles, of building frame houses, from 1849 to 1860, and

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[52]Glassie, Southern Mountain Houses, 169-76.

[53]Manuscript entitled Robert Burchfield and Tiptons Related to Cades Cove by John W. Oliver, written in 1947. This book containing 41 pages is in the author's possession. Hereafter cited J. W. Oliver, Burchfield and Tiptons, with appropriate page numbers.

[54]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 23.

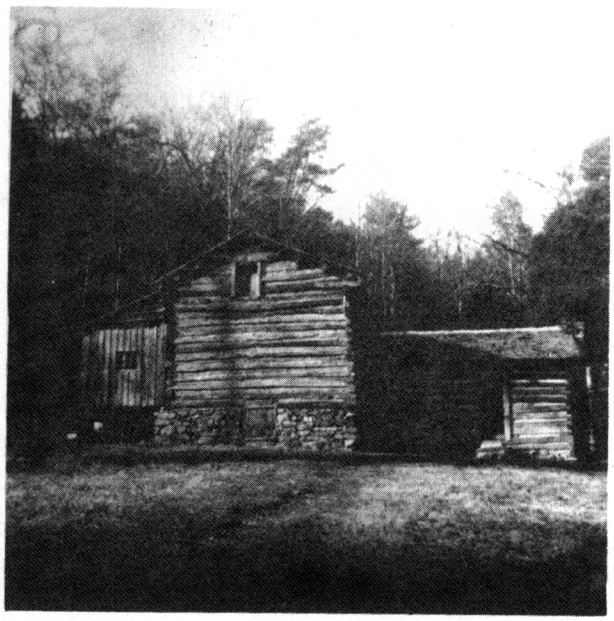


FIGURE 4

ELIJAH OLIVER HOUSE



FIGURE 5

HENRY WHITEHEAD HOUSE



FIGURE 6

OLIVER-TIPTON HOUSE

from the 1880's to the end of the century, again furnish clear evidence that the type of architecture found in Cades Cove was a function of the relative prosperity of an agricultural-based economy, not of the surrounding wilderness.

There are other indications that during relatively prosperous times, the inhabitants chose to buy a wide variety of manufactured household and farm implements to replace the cruder homemade tools of an earlier period. While the typical farmer might wear homespun during working days, most of them could afford at least one suit of store-bought clothes for Sunday. Side by side with kitchen utensils made of wood, one might find an occasional set of imported English china.[55] Although purchases of the latter sort could usually be made only in Knoxville, there is no indication that the cove farmers did not share an interest in purchasing a wide variety of manufactured goods in common with their counterparts in the rest of the country, provided there was ready cash. It is interesting to note, as corroborative evidence, that during the worst part of the Civil War, Elijah Oliver made frequent trips, and brought back many purchases, from Knoxville merchants.[56]

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[55]Examples of such china from the nineteenth century are in the Oliver collection, in the possession of Mrs. Charles S. Dunn, Townsend, Tennessee. The Oliver china bears the imprint "THOMs HUGHES & SON ENGLAND." Because such china was not durable, only fragments survive into the twentieth century, and this lack of evidence is complicated by the abundance of the more durable wooden utensils.

[56]Numerous passes to Knoxville and bills of sale from Knoxville and Maryville merchants are in the Oliver Papers in possession of Judge W. Wayne Oliver, Maryville, Tennessee. These passes from the Office of the Provost Marshal General of East Tennessee were issued to Elijah Oliver as receipts that he had furnished proof of loyalty, and range from June 7, 1861, to January 11, 1865. Store receipts for a wide

The picture that emerges from an examination of the cove's domestic economy is one of wide diversity. Basic pioneer skills, such as spinning flax for thread from which homespun was woven, were in general use throughout the century.[57] But these skills did not automatically exclude a desire for other manufactured products. The cove people seemed to be able to manage a careful exploitation of the surrounding wilderness, and still keep abreast, during prosperous times, of more finished products available in the larger market areas such as Knoxville. This dichotomy makes any rigid characterization of their life style extremely difficult. And in analyzing their relationship to the wilderness, the continuous intercourse with larger regional markets makes the cove people appear rather more than less like their contemporaries in other parts of the country.

Attitudes toward the wilderness also varied greatly from one period to another, and among different groups during the same period of time. Dr. Jobe reflected the initial fear of the wilderness as a hiding place for hostile Indians and wolves, but even this attitude is obviously traceable from earlier experience and associations. He identified the

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variety of goods were from P. H. Cardwell (Dry Goods, Boots, Shoes, Hats, Caps, Stationary, Notions, etc.); Crooker & Bunnell's Funnel Clothes Washers (a rather frivolous and somewhat extravagant item for the sober Elijah to be buying!); Tedford & Lowe, Dispensing Druggists, Maryville; and a receipt for Dr. R. V. Pierce's The People's Common Sense Medical Adviser. (Dr. Pierce was one of Dr. Gunn's many competitors.)

[57]According to J. W. Oliver (Cades Cove, I, 25), "Each family grew flax from which to make articles of clothing and other household goods such as hand towels, bed spreads, etc. The coarse short part of the flax was used to weave hunting shirts, and if worn next to your body was irritating to the skin."

Cherokee Indians "who had been such a terror to the settlement in the Watauga Valley," and clearly transposed earlier difficulties with other Indians in upper East Tennessee to the new locale.[58] Since his uncle was killed by Cherokee living in the cove, Dr. Jobe's fears were not unfounded. But the important point is that this whole range of fear and suspicion, linking the Indians to the wilderness as a sinister environment, was part of the cultural attitudes which he and other early settlers brought with them.

Once the threat of Indians was removed, and the wolf population diminished, the wilderness lost much of its menacing quality to the cove inhabitants. Most were pragmatic about any possible dangers encountered while in the mountains, and from this attitude came a pragmatic view of the wilderness in general. It was true that various accidents, even death, awaited the careless hunter or unwary traveler. But such occurrences were invariably attributed to the individual's own neglect. For every danger, there was a preventative measure; if one's fire went out, or if one ran out of food or supplies, there were many alternative measures one could take to repair the loss. Because these various survival techniques were discussed and elaborated on at length by the cove people in their daily conversations, it was improbable that anyone could not have heard, at some time or another, the necessary details of how to survive in the wilderness.[59]

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[58]Jobe, Autobiography, 7.

[59]Interview with John W. Oliver, July 18, 1963.

Although women generally were not expected to go alone into the mountains, or to possess any hunting skills, in various periods of the cove's history they were often required by circumstances to do so. The lore, or body of folk knowledge on how to survive in the wilderness, was a common topic of conversation at night around the fireplace. Consequently the women were regularly exposed to these details, and were usually not at a loss when required to confront the wilderness alone. Such occurrences were rare, most happening during the Civil War, when a majority of the younger men were away. The knowledge of how to survive in the wilderness and the concurrent pragmatic attitudes were deeply embedded in the folk knowledge of Cades Cove, and were not the exclusive property of any single sex or age group.[60]

After the initial settlement period, the inhabitants did not conceptualize the wilderness as being dangerous; they therefore showed little fear of the surrounding mountains. Analyzing their attitudes is particularly difficult from manuscript sources: oral history provides far more insight into a people's values, since any group is normally reluctant to write down attitudes which they consider common knowledge. Corroboration of this lack of fear of the wilderness in Cades Cove is furnished by the fact that there are no tales of supernatural phenomena occurring in the mountains surrounding the cove. This is not to say that the cove folklore was not rich in supernatural stories; but all

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[60] Ibid.; W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 23-37.

these ghost, or "hant," tales were associated with places in the cove proper; none occurred in the surrounding mountains.[61]

Occasionally various animals caused some fear. In the mountains, the scream of a panther could momentarily frighten anyone. Many tales relating to panthers, which were feared and thought to be aggressive by some of the cove people, have been handed down.[62] Generally, however, wild animals were valued for practical reasons, since hunting them provided sport, food, and perhaps furs for sale. The cove people often allowed their children to make pets out of these wild animals. The almost nonchalant attitude toward such pets and their easy relationship with such wild animals is reflected in the nostalgic recollection of Dr. Jobe:

> We had a pet bear for several years, he was very large, tame and gentle. He would get loose once in a while, but we could always catch him and tie him again. I remember he got loose one night, and came in at a window to where a younger brother and I were sleeping. It scared us badly, but as soon as he drank a churn-full of buttermilk, he went out at the window, and was roaming around about the barn at daylight. I have heard people say a bear could not be hurt by bees stinging them, but its a mistake. I remember one Sunday, while all were at Church, except a few of us little children, our bees swarmed, and settled on the body of the tree above where bruin was tied. He kept looking up at the big knot of bees, as though he would like to know what they were, so after a while he went up the tree, on a tour of inspection. He looked at them for a while, then he wiped them off with his nose; and the bees began to sting him, and he began to "holler," and rip and tare. He broke his collar at last and away he went to the

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[61] Interview with John W. Oliver, July 18, 1963. See Chapter VI for discussion of these stories.

[62] For an example of the tall tales about panthers, see Douglas, "People of Cades Cove," 82.

> woods, but returned in a few hours. They stung him on his breast and paws, but mostly about his nose and eyes.[63]

Some individuals preferred to live alone in the surrounding mountains and to keep contact with the densely populated cove at a minimum. Probably the earliest example of such an individual was James Spence, who moved from Virginia to the White Oak Cove, immediately adjoining Cades Cove, in the late 1820's. In 1830, he and his wife, Caroline Law, built a cabin on the top of the mountain at a place which now bears their name: the Spence Field. Both loved the wilderness, and moved to the Spence Field early each spring and stayed there until late in the fall. There they herded cattle and grew such vegetables and crops as the high altitude would permit. This type of nomadic life was difficult for Caroline. A few days before the birth of their son Robert in 1840, she walked alone ten miles to their home in the White Oak Cove in order to be near neighbors who could assist her. Other than such emergencies as childbirth and the approach of winter, however, nothing could induce them to leave their mountain.[64]

The Spences were willing to spend at least part of each year in the cove, but Wilson, or Wils Burchfield was not. Arriving with his wife, Elizabeth Baker, shortly before the Civil War, Wils chose to settle in what later became known as the Chestnut Flats, an area at the southwest end of Cades Cove. "A lover of sports and of the wilds of the forests

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[63]Jobe, Autobiography, 19.

[64]Miscellaneous Account Book No. 1, pp. 126-27. This book, which contains numerous scraps of cove history, was written by John W. Oliver and is in the author's possession.

and mountains, a great hunter and frontiersman," Wils "loved to get as far away from civilization as possible." He built his cabin just under Gregory's Bald in the heart of the Great Smokies to escape any contact with the cove people. Hating and avoiding contact with any form of institutional life—churches, schools, etc.—he cleared his land and grew crops, and hunted wild game to support his large family in complete isolation from the social and political mainstream of the cove proper.[65]

The most famous man in the cove history, Russell Gregory, also loved the wilderness solitude. Moving to Cades Cove from Yancey County, North Carolina, in 1835 with his wife, Elizabeth Hill, he settled on a farm in the middle of the cove. Shortly after his arrival he entered several thousand acres of mountain land both in Tennessee and North Carolina, including Gregory's Bald, which derived its name from him. On this bald he built a cylindrically shaped stone house with large windows, or "port holes," as he called them. On moonlit nights he concealed himself in this structure and poked his rifle, "Old Long Tom," through one of the windows to shoot deer which came near to lick salt.[66]

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[65]Among his most prized possessions was a flint lock rifle which he named "Old Bean" after its manufacturer, Baxter Bean of the Bean family, noted gunsmiths in the nineteenth century. J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 9-10.

[66]As a rancher, Gregory came in contact with a large number of stockmen and became widely known. He was famous for his method of calling cattle. Using a large blowing horn, he summoned them to the top of Gregory's Bald from miles around in order to salt them. The sight and sounds of hundreds of cattle converging on him with their bells jingling remained for many years one of the cove's most memorable spectacles. Ibid., 11-12.

No one loved the wilderness more than Russell Gregory, or spent as much time alone in the Great Smoky Mountains. He even built his house in the cove facing Gregory's Bald, so that he had a full view of his mountain during the winter months when he could not be there.[67] Yet his love of the wilderness did not make Russell hate civilization, as it did Wils Burchfield. In many respects, Gregory personified the qualities most admired by the cove people during the nineteenth century. He had a deep sense of responsibility, not only to his immediate family, but to the larger community and nation. Completely involved in all aspects of community life, he became a leader in the church and a full participant in the political, social, and educational life of Cades Cove. This sense of responsibility was complemented by an even temper and calm disposition. Frequently he was called on to settle local disputes; his decision was seldom challenged or questioned.[68]

Spence, Burchfield, and Gregory were men of widely differing interests and attitudes, but each preferred to spend most of his time in the solitude of the mountains surrounding the cove. Yet the very complexity of these men's personalities makes it difficult to measure the impact of the wilderness on the larger number of men and women who chose to make Cades Cove their permanent home during the nineteenth century. Often former residents in their correspondence reflected regret at leaving the cove; almost always, however, economic opportunities were described as being better in their new homes in the West. Fragments

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[67] Ibid., 11.

[68] Ibid.

remain which indicate cove residents often remained there at a conscious financial loss. A letter in 1854 from Isaac Hart in Athens, Tennessee, to his nephew, Colonel J. W. Hampton Tipton in the cove, illustrates this situation:

> Now if you will leave the Coves you can do well but if you lay out your money for land in the Coves, Goodby Hampton. You had better come down and look here, for land is advancing every day . . . .
>
> We made 100 bu. of fine wheat. We do not have to labor under the same difficulties as you do. We have thrashers here that can thrash from 100 to 200 bu. a day. You have to flail after the old dugout, go to the thicket, cut a pole and lay on all day. At night fan out 5 or 6 bu. with a sheet. Then you go 15 or 20 miles to get flour fit to eat.
>
> I'll say to Catherine to push you off. Here she need not spin anymore cotton for she can make more thread in three months raising chickens than she can spin in 12 months.
>
> But I dont think you will come. Your attachment is so strong for them mountains that it will be hard for you to part with that grand scenery.[69]

Yet basically the wilderness was important to the cove people primarily for economic reasons. The surrounding mountains provided them with both food and shelter, with marketable products, and with a safe retreat during the Civil War. Although some individuals preferred living alone there, the wilderness did not determine the pattern of their development or shape the life style of the majority of the cove people in any appreciable degree. Their basic beliefs, political, social, and religious, stemmed from the mainstream of nineteenth century American culture, and proved surprisingly resilient to the many obstacles which later occurred. Like a mountain stream temporarily diverted into a

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[69]Olga Jones Edwards and Izora Waters Frizzell, The "Connection" in East Tennessee (Washington College, Tennessee, 1969), 239.

quiet isolated pool, this basic cultural orientation never completely lost its identity, and could later rejoin the mainstream with little real difficulty. And like their contemporaries in other parts of the United States, the quality and style of their lives were largely determined by the market economy.

CHAPTER III

THE MARKET ECONOMY

Geography was an important, but not a determining factor, in shaping the communal response of the cove people to their wilderness environment. In the development of a market economy, however, the effect of physiography on the trade routes of East Tennessee was the single most important factor. The economic life of Cades Cove must be analyzed within the context of larger regional, state, and national market patterns. At the same time that the cove men were struggling to get a passable road through the mountains to Knoxville, they shared an indirect, but nevertheless very important stake, in whether Knoxville achieved steamboat transportation, or later, railroads. Without this awareness of East Tennessee's century-long struggle, often unsuccessful, to obtain transportation facilities which would make her comparable to and competitive with other regions, the economic development of Cades Cove makes little sense.[1]

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[1]Stanley J. Folmsbee, Sectionalism and Internal Improvements in Tennessee, 1796-1845 (Knoxville, 1939), 1-19; Harry H. Gauding, A History of Water Transportation in East Tennessee Prior to the Civil War (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1933), 101; Riley O. Biggs, The Development of Railroad Transportation in East Tennessee During the Reconstruction Period (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1934), 118-37. It is Biggs' thesis that East Tennesseans used their temporary control of the state government after the Civil War to obtain enormous loans to finance local railroad construction and enjoyed privileges not shared by other sections of the state. During other periods, however, East Tennessee received little assistance from the state or national government for internal improvements.

The high crest line of the Unaka Mountains, ranging from altitudes between 4,000 to 6,650 feet above sea level, formed a great barrier between East Tennessee and North Carolina.[2] If Cades Cove had been located on the eastern, or North Carolina side of these mountains, her economic development would have been quite different. Western North Carolina was mountainous in topography, and never developed transportation facilities which permitted the growth of any commercial center comparable to Knoxville in East Tennessee.[3] The few rivers which drained this mountain region, such as the Yadkin, Catawa, or French Broad, were "not navigable until they left the state." Inasmuch as road construction in the mountains was extremely difficult before dynamite and blasting powder came into use, the roads in the western portion of the state through most of the nineteenth century were "only a slight improvement over those of the colonial era." John Preston Arthur maintained that these Western North Carolina roads were "frequently too steep even for the overtaxed oxen and horses of that time." The North Carolina coast, with its sand bars, frequent storms, and reputation as "the graveyard of the Atlantic," isolated the region from the seaways of the world and further retarded the commercial development of the entire state.[4]

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[2]Burchfiel, The Unaka Mountains, 2, 118-22.

[3]Lewis Cecil Gray, History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860 (2 vols., Washington, D. C., 1933), II, 754, 773, 816, 840, 882-83.

[4]Hugh T. Lefler, History of North Carolina (2 vols., New York, 1956), I, 303; Arthur, Western North Carolina, 230.

So despite several Indian trails, such as the one through Ekaneetlee Gap, Cades Cove never developed significant commercial ties with North Carolina, whose close proximity would under different circumstances have made that state the logical outlet for her marketable crops. It is interesting to note in this regard that when the eminent Knoxville physician and entrepreneur, Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey, first became interested in a direct railroad to the Atlantic seaboard in the 1820's, the projected terminus was Charleston or Savannah on a route which would completely bypass North Carolina.[5]

Cades Cove quite naturally fell within the sphere of the largest commercial center of upper East Tennessee at Knoxville, some forty miles northwest. Knoxville was situated four and one-half miles west of the junction where the Holston and French Broad Rivers formed the Tennessee River. The Valley of East Tennessee lies within a greater trough extending southwestward from New York to central Alabama. This Great Valley, as the larger trough is called, is bounded on the southeast by the Appalachian Mountains and on the northwest by the Appalachian Plateau. It has always served as an enormous internal highway; even later railroads followed the natural topography and have paralleled older routes. The Tennessee Valley, as a segment of this larger trade route, determined

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[5]Folmsbee, Sectionalism, 86; Knoxville Register, March 12, 1828. Dr. Ramsey, an acute observer of the economic development of East Tennessee, early recognized the area's need for better transportation facilities. For the best analysis of Ramsey's role in attempting to obtain better transportation facilities, see David Lawson Eubanks, Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey of East Tennessee: A Career of Public Service (Doctoral dissertation, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1965), 94-141.

that East Tennessee would always be "bound more closely to eastern Pennsylvania and New York or Georgia and Alabama than to North Carolina."[6]

It is much easier to discuss geography and natural trade routes than to attempt to characterize larger ideas and attitudes which motivate an area's search for markets. The booster spirit in Knoxville, however, reflected so clearly in such men as Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey, was contagious. Despite difficult odds and frequent failure, these men boosted their area and almost seemed at times to believe their own propaganda that Knoxville was destined to become the commercial center of the Southeast.[7] This exuberant attitude was characterized by an inextinguishable optimism and by a restless, searching, and often creative energy on the part of the men who possessed it.

Dr. Ramsey may not have been personally acquainted with Daniel D. Foute, but as entrepreneurs par excellence they were certainly spiritual brothers. Foute had great dreams for the agricultural, commercial, and industrial development of Cades Cove, and spent his energy and fortune in attempting to realize these dreams.[8] His ideas and projects made the

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[6]George C. Martin, Jr., The Effect of Physiography on the Trade Routes of East Tennessee (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1932), 100-103.

[7]Eubanks, Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey, 94-141. For a discussion of the function of boosters within the broader spectrum of American culture, see Daniel J. Boorstin, The Americans: The National Experience (New York, 1965), 296-97.

[8]Burns, Blount County, 41, 65, 79, 80, 85, 119, 173, 174, 210, 242, 244, 276, 280; Blount Deeds, 1826-1860, passim; Elvie Eagleton Skipper and Ruth Gove, eds., "'Stray Thoughts:' The Civil-War Diary of Ethie M. Foute Eagleton," Part I, ETHS Publications, No. 40 (1968), 130.

cove during the formative years of its economic development very closely attuned to the commercial aspirations of Knoxville and the larger region. In this sense, the entrepreneural spirit accounted for subtle, but nevertheless extremely important differences between Western North Carolina and East Tennessee. Geography alone did not determine the cove's commercial and later political alignment with the latter section.

During the 1820's, the economic life of Cades Cove centered around basic problems of clearing the land of trees and draining the extensive swamps in the lower end. Although patterns of land development in the pioneer stage tended to be uniform throughout the larger region, draining the lower end of the cove presented problems beyond the usual scope of the early settlers. Peter Cable solved this problem by directing the construction of a series of dikes and log booms placed across Abram's Creek and some of the smaller tributaries. This ingenious arrangement allowed the fertile soil to be trapped and distributed evenly on the low areas.[9]

Through Cable's plan, the lower end of the cove was thus drained and actually raised several feet in lower areas. As a consequence, the prime land in the cove, the farming area most desired for its fertility, shifted from the upper, or northeast part of the cove, which was somewhat hilly in places, to the broad flat meadows of the middle and lower end. This reclamation occurred in the late 1820's, and explains in part why

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[9]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 23-25; Margaret Elisabeth Gamble, The Heritage and Folk Music of Cades Cove, Tennessee (Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1947), 43.

earlier settlers had chosen to locate their homesteads in the upper end of the cove. Usually first comers seized the best land, but in this instance, the better farming areas were developed after the initial settlement period.[10]

Peter Cable's engineering skills were part of his wide-ranging building skills, and were customarily attributed by the cove people to his Pennsylvania-Dutch origins. Yet Cable left a more important legacy than his many farm inventions or building skills. As the incident cited above illustrates, he was deeply concerned with improving, extending, and conserving the arable central basin of Cades Cove. Obviously there were many farmers throughout the century who employed the worst, most wasteful practices in their farming. But for the majority of cove farmers, Cable set the example, almost from the beginning, of careful, consistently conservative farming methodology.[11]

Cable was also aided in his philosophy of careful land use and conservation by the geographical limitations of the cove: there was only so much arable land, and if it was not carefully used, some cove residents might be forced to leave the community.[12] So community ties were inextricably bound up in the careful cultivation of a limited

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[10]Interview with John W. Oliver, July 19, 1963.

[11]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 23-24.

[12]Cable lived until 1866, and several generations of cove farmers benefited from his wisdom and experience. He was always anxious to assist anyone in the cove who needed help, and this very approachability meant that his numerous skills were widely distributed in the community along with his basic attitudes toward conserving the land. Ibid.

amount of land, in striking contrast to their wasteful consumption of products supplied by the surrounding wilderness. The net result of Cable's efforts was that the rich soil of the cove basin remained productive at the end of the century and was not depleted, as happened in so many other areas within the larger region.[13]

During the formative years of the 1820's, a heavy dependence on neighboring Tuckaleechee Cove is clearly discernable. Tuckaleechee Cove was older and more established, having been settled in the late 1790's, and the geographic proximity of the two coves formed a natural basis for close ties between the two communities. Although many of the initial cove settlers had come from Carter County, their ties with upper East Tennessee proved difficult to maintain and were soon dissolved.[14] Dr. Jobe mentioned in his autobiography that no fruit trees had been planted in the cove when his family arrived, and for several years the cove inhabitants had to get all their fruit from Uncle Billy Scott in Tuckaleechee Cove.[15] Until 1873, the closest store was that of George Snider in the adjacent cove. All farm machinery or tools, as well as seed for a variety of crops, could be bought at Snider's store. Snider

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[13]Ayres and Ashe, "Southern Appalachian Forests," 176.

[14]Between the presidential elections of 1832 and 1840, Carter County became overwhelmingly Whig in opposition to Jackson and his policies. Settlers who had left the county before 1832 and settled in Cades Cove, such as John Oliver, were unaffected by this "almost mass transformation of public opinion," and remained loyal to Jackson. W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 1-4; Frank Merritt, Selected Aspects of Early Carter County History, 1760-1861 (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1950), 60.

[15]Jobe, Autobiography, 18.

assisted the cove people in many other ways. He reduced his profit on goods sold to them because of the distance they travelled, and extended credit on a fairly liberal basis.[16] Snider's example is only one of many instances in which the established community helped Cades Cove in the struggling years of the 1820's. But those close economic ties foreshadowed a future time when the cove's political allegiances followed those of Tuckaleechee Cove, and the early economic connections, if not determinative, certainly would be a strong contributing factor.

Their early economic tutelage under Tuckaleechee Cove, however, did not mean that the people of Cades Cove would imitate their neighboring community in the important matter of land distribution. Possibly no other single index can be cited to document basic economic changes within the cove than the average number of acres per farm throughout the century. Unfortunately the only agricultural schedules which give these statistics are in the 1850, 1860, and 1880 census. These records, however, correlated with deeds and with the population schedules of the same census, form a clear picture of basic changes in the pattern of land distribution.

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[16]Interview with Miss Bertha Dunn, a granddaughter of Snider, Townsend, Tennessee, December 8, 1973; George Snider's Store Account Book, 1867-73, in possession of the author. Snider operated the first store in Tuckaleechee Cove. Burns, "Settlement and Early History," 54. His account book proves that the cove people were buying a wide variety of goods, i.e., clothes, shoes, cloth, and hats, which were not essential to their daily lives, since they presumably had the skills to make these items at home. The continuing purchase of nonessential items is a clear indication that the cove people remained oriented to the larger regional market economy, even in the difficult years just after the Civil War.

Records from the deeds before 1850 are incomplete, but it is evident from the records which have survived that the average size of the cove's farms between 1820 and 1850 usually ranged from 150 to 300 acres.[17]

This impression excludes such large landholders as William Tipton and Daniel D. Foute, who will be considered separately. Part of the problem in analyzing the size of a typical farm before the first agricultural census in 1850 is that deeds make no distinction between improved and unimproved land, that is, between land actually being cultivated and land held for timber or pasture. Often entrepreneurs such as William Tipton sold tracts of their land or gave such tracts to their children in a gradual division of what were initially extremely large holdings.[18] Other cove farmers were adding tracts of land to their holdings during the prosperous 1840's and 1850's. From the extant records of such transactions, the impression is clear that farms in the cove before 1850 varied greatly in size, and the estimate of between 150 and 300 acres represents an average rather than a mean distribution. It is also clear that the number of land transactions was much greater in the formative years 1820-1860 than in the thirty-five years after the Civil War.

The agricultural schedule of the 1850 census reveals that over three-fourths of the cove inhabitants lived on farms of 100 acres or less of improved land. The acres of improved land are the only reliable

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[17]Blount Deeds, 1820-1850, passim.

[18]Blount Deeds, 1821-1836, passim; Burns, "Settlement and Early History," 59.

guide to farm size, since they represent land under actual cultivation, and the unimproved land could well be forested land in the mountains outside the cove proper. The figures given below make no distinction between owners and tenants; land ownership will be analyzed separately. Excluding the extensive holdings of Daniel D. Foute, in 1850 one-third of the cove farmers lived on farms of from one to twenty-five acres of improved land; almost one-fifth lived on farms of from twenty-six to fifty acres; slightly over one-fourth lived on farms of from fifty-one to one hundred acres; one-eighth lived on farms of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty acres; and one-eighteenth lived on farms of from one hundred fifty-one to two hundred acres.[19]

By 1860, almost one-third of the cove farmers lived on farms of from twenty-six to fifty acres of improved land; slightly over one-half lived on farms of from fifty-one to one hundred acres; one-tenth lived on farms of from one hundred fifty-one to two hundred acres; and one-eighteenth lived on farms of from two hundred and one to three hundred acres.[20] This substantial increase in the size of farms during the 1850's is possibly attributable in part to the great decline in the total population of the cove from 671 in 1850 to 296 in 1860 caused by a mass migration in the 1850's to the West.[21] A more probable explanation is that the 1850's were prosperous years in terms of market commodities

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[19]1850 Census, Agriculture, Blount County.

[20]1860 Census, Agriculture, Blount County.

[21]1850 Census, Population, Blount County; 1860 Census, Population, Blount County.

in East Tennessee, particularly for wheat, and this general prosperity evidently allowed cove farmers to increase their holdings, however modestly.[22]

No figures are extant from the 1870 agricultural census, but by 1880, it is evident that the Civil War had had a devastating effect on land distribution in the cove. According to the agricultural census of 1880, three-fifths of the cove farmers lived on farms of from one to twenty-five acres; slightly over one-fifth lived on farms of from twenty-six to fifty acres; one-seventh lived on farms of from fifty-one to one hundred acres; and 3.9 percent lived on farms from one hundred one to two hundred acres. The dramatic reduction in the size of cove farms is attributable to the economic devastation of the region following the Civil War. The extent of reduction is further emphasized by the fact that almost a third (32.9 percent) of the cove farms in 1880 contained only ten acres or less of improved land.[23] (See Table 1.)

From these figures it is evident that land distribution in the cove was not correlated to the size of the population. In 1850, for instance, with a total population of 671, the average farm was 83.98 acres. In 1880, with a much smaller total population of 449, the average farm had dropped to 30.84 acres.[24] So the size of the average cove farm in any

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[22]Ben T. Lanham, Jr., Type-Of-Farming Regions, and Factors Influencing Type-Of-Farming Regions in Tennessee (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1938), 61.

[23]1880 Census, Agriculture, Blount County.

[24]Ibid.; 1850 Census, Agriculture, Blount County.

TABLE 1

SIZE OF COVE FARMS PER ACRE

Number and Percentage of Farms		ACREAGE 1-25	26-50	51-100	101-150	151-200	201-300	301-400	401-500	500+
1850	Improved Land	19 33.9%	10 17.9%	15 26.8%	7 12.5%	3 5.4%	1 1.8%	1 1.8%		
	Unimproved Land	4 7.1%	8 14.3%	11 19.6%	9 16.1%	11 19.6%	5 8.9%	3 5.4%	1 1.8%	4 7.1%
1860	Improved Land		6 31.6%	10 52.6%		2 10.5%	1 5.3%			
	Unimproved Land		5 26.3%	2 10.5%	4 21.1%	2 10.5%	1 5.3%	4 21.1%	1 5.3%	
1880	Improved Land	45 59.2%	17 22.4%	11 14.5%	3 3.9%					
	Unimproved Land	16 21.1%	17 22.4%	23 30.3%	7 9.2%	5 6.6%	4 5.3%	1 1.3%		3 3.9%

Source: Compiled from Agricultural Schedules, 1850, 1860, and 1880 Census, Blount County, Tennessee.

given year was determined not by the total population of the cove, but rather by the general economic conditions of the larger region. This conclusion reinforces the fact that the cove economy was market-oriented; a more self-sufficient community would not have experienced the rather drastic alteration of internal land distribution resulting from a regional depression in farm prices.

The price of land in the cove does not furnish a clear index to changing economic conditions throughout the century. During the 1820's, land varied in the initial grants from $1.00 to $5.83 per acre.[25] Between 1830 and 1860, unimproved mountain land remained in the category of from $1.00 to $2.00 per acre, but the fertile land of the cove basin brought from $2.00 to $8.00 per acre, usually averaging between $4.00 and $5.00 per acre.[26]

Land prices are difficult to analyze due to a wide range of intervening variables which are illuminated only by a careful reading of all the extant deeds for cove land in the nineteenth century. Obviously there were differences in the land itself; some parts of the cove were more fertile than others, a situation confirmed by later geological studies. Ayres and Ashe pointed out in 1905 that there were spots in the cove of "so-called 'dead land,' where the soil seems to contain some ingredient unfavorable to plant growth. The areas of this sort are not large, however."[27] The condition of a particular farm also determined

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[25]Blount Deeds, 1821-1830, passim.

[26]Blount Deeds, 1830-1860, passim.

[27]Ayres and Ashe, "Southern Appalachian Forests," 176.

its value, as well as the number and type of "improvements," houses or barns, on the property. The only really valid generalization one can make is that land in the center of the cove always brought higher prices than did land on the periphery.

Time was another important variable in determining the price of land. Although there is really no discernable increase in land prices between 1830 and 1860, there is often a wide fluctuation in prices within any given decade. Economic depressions in the larger region obviously affected land prices. The pattern of immigration from the cove also played a role. Many cove residents sold out in the 1840's, to move to new lands being opened in the West, and the prices they received from such hurried sales were often far below par.[28] Large entrepreneurs, particularly Daniel D. Foute, had enough capital to buy farms cheaply from those residents emigrating to the West and hold these lands until prices increased.

If one examines Foute's numerous transactions carefully, however, there is no real evidence to indicate that in the majority of land sales he paid less than the standard rate for land in the three decades after 1830. Foute was interested in obtaining title to large holdings of mountain land for various speculative enterprises, but he also bought up

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[28]Most of the Tiptons sold their property in the 1840's and moved to Missouri. Often they were able to find someone in the cove to act as their agent in selling their cove property, but the number of farms suddenly placed on the market during this period lowered the price of land. Blount Deeds, 1840-1849, passim; Burns, Blount County, 275; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 10, 21-22.

large holdings of the fertile farming basin.[29] His active interest in the economic development of Cades Cove probably kept land prices up, but the community benefited from his numerous enterprises, such as building roads. So the agrarian economy of the cove gained rather than lost from Foute's activities, although his land speculation might appear to have had a deleterious effect on the internal economy of the cove by driving land prices up.

Foute's speculative ventures illuminate another important variable in the price of cove land: the shortage of specie, or cash, among the majority of cove farmers throughout the century. John Oliver said in later years that the best farm in the cove could be obtained for a milk cow in the 1820's.[30] Specie remained scarce, however, and this scarcity kept land prices low throughout most of the century. There is some evidence that during the Civil War land prices rose dramatically, but the explanation lies in the fact that Confederate money was used in such purchases.[31]

The real key to understanding the price of land lies in the leaborate kinship structure which developed in the cove, and in the growing sense

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[29]Blount Deeds, 1830-1860, passim; Burns, "Settlement and Early History," 62. At the time of his death in 1865 Foute still owned 20,000 acres in the cove.

[30]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 10.

[31]Blount Deeds, 1861-65, passim. An ardent Confederate, Foute used Confederate money in his exchanges throughout the war. This is probably one reason he died in poverty in 1865. Burns, Blount County, 65. There is also evidence that state bonds were used earlier in the century, which might have inflated prices. One such transaction in 1847 mentioned "$12,000 to be paid in South or North Carolina money and in trade." Thomas Davis to D. D. Foute, January 14, 1847, Blount Deeds, Book V, p. 138.

of communal responsibility. Parents frequently deeded land to their children, as has been described earlier, for a nominal fee or gratis. The common term used in such deeds was "for love and affection," and this phrase appears in many transactions throughout the century.[32] Responsible individuals often gave land for the construction of a church or other public buildings such as schools. Widows were often provided for by collective land contributions.[33]

Such transactions for charitable purposes are easily recognizable in the land deeds. More subtle exchanges involved land sales to one's kin of varying degrees of relatedness. In such transactions, the price was adjusted by the relationship of the donor and the degree of need on the part of the grantee. This transposition of the kinship structure onto land values, clearly reflected in the deeds, may seem supererogatory in strict economic terms, but it reinforces the conclusion that the cove economy was inextricably bound up in a value system which did not perceive land or commodity prices within the cove in absolute or fixed terms.[34] Land ownership usually conferred status on the individual

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[32]Blount Deeds, 1821-1890, passim. Examples are William Tipton to Martha Hart, 80 acres "for love and affection," April 2, 1825, Blount Deeds, Book 2, p. 497; Thomas Carver Sr. to Alfred Burton Carver, son of Reuben Carver, 52 acres, February 6, 1836, Blount Deeds, Book 3, p. 190; William Tipton to David B. Tipton, 140 acres, May 25, 1837, Blount Deeds, Book M, p. 300.

[33]Blount Deeds, 1821-1890, passim.

[34]Ibid. Foute traded a town lot in 1830 for two saddles, which gives some idea of relative land values and the scarcity of specie. Skipper and Gove, "'Stray Thoughts,'" Part I, 130.

farmer, but it was only one of many factors which determined comparative standing within the community.

On rare occasions, the community could act collectively to fix land prices. The auctioning of the extensive holdings of Foute after the Civil War was one such occasion. The community appeared en masse at this sale, and refused to bid against one another, or to allow outsiders to bid on cove land. Consequently the land was sold for ridiculously low prices; 160 acres went for $10.00 to Dan B. Lawson, for instance, and the old Hyatt farm containing 80 acres was sold to J. C. N. Bogle for $16.00. The really interesting part about these auctions, however, is the fact that not all the land went cheaply. Those able to pay were obliged to make a bid more comparable to the actual value of the land.[35] So the community, acting collectively, not only assured poorer cove farmers the right to bid in their land cheaply, but actually effected a gradation of land prices to fit the condition of the land and the comparative ability of the buyer to pay.

Postwar land prices remained depressed throughout the century, reflecting the larger regional depression. At the end of the century, according to Ayres and Ashe, "the best farm in the valley can be bought for $5.00 per acre," and fifty cents an acre was considered a good price for the mountain land surrounding the cove.[36] Even though units of land

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[35]Blount Minutes, 1866; Blount County Chancery Court, Report on the Daniel D. Foute Estate Settlement, 1866. The Chancery Court settled the estate of Foute as an insolvent estate, selling his extensive holdings in three public land auctions.

[36]Ayres and Ashe, "Southern Appalachian Forests," 177.

sold after the war contained fewer acres than did prewar farms, the price per acre was generally much lower. Given the complex variety of intervening variables, postwar land prices were not really any index to the general state of the economy, particularly in view of the increasing importance of the kinship structure.

If the Civil War drastically reduced the size and price of the average cove farm, it produced no such comparable reduction in land ownership. Actually, tenant farming was well established by 1860. According to the census of that year, twenty heads of household owned their farms, and twenty-four heads of household were tenants.[37] So in 1860 54.5 percent of the cove farmers were tenants, and only 45.5 percent owned their own land. The Civil War changed these figures only slightly. In 1870, twenty-three heads of household owned their own land, and thirty-two were tenants.[38] Thus the percentage of land owners had dropped from 45.5 percent in 1860 to 41.8 percent in 1870, and the percentage of tenants had risen from 54.5 percent to 58.2 percent. A drop of 3.7 percent in land ownership after the war is really not significant when compared to the much more drastic reduction between 1860 and 1880 in the size of the cove farms.

In 1880, with a steady increase in population from 296 in 1860 to 382 in 1870 to 449 in 1880, the percentage of land owners had risen dramatically. In that year, fifty-three household heads owned their

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[37] 1860 Census, Population, Blount County.

[38] 1870 Census, Population, Blount County.

own land, and twenty-three remained tenants, an increase in number of owners from 41.8 percent in 1870 to 69.7 percent in 1880, a dramatic rise of 27.9 percent.[39] Since regional farm prices actually declined during this period, an explanation other than the return of general prosperity must be found to account for the great reduction in tenant farming between 1870 and 1880. Part of the answer obviously lies in the drastic reduction of the size of cove farms, with almost one third of these farms numbering ten acres or less by 1880.[40] A more complete explanation may be found in the changing social structure of the cove population between 1850 and 1880. In 1850, there were eighty-six surnames in a total population of 671. By 1880, this number had dropped to forty-five surnames for a total population of 449.[41] The proportional drop in the number of surnames was 21.8 percent, and indicates that many more cove families were related to each other by 1880. Even this figure is misleading, because through intermarriage most of the cove families were indirectly related in a kinship structure of varying degrees not reflected completely in the number of surnames alone.[42]

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[39]1880 Census, Population, Blount County.

[40]1880 Census, Agriculture, Blount County.

[41]1850 Census, Population, Blount County; 1880 Census, Population, Blount County.

[42]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, III, 2-18. Most of the older cove families, the Olivers, Cables, Shields, Burchfields, Tiptons, and Gregorys, had intermarried by 1880. See also Edwards and Frizzell, The "Connection," 243-53.

The fact that by 1880 most cove families were directly or indirectly related had tremendous implications for the economic life of the cove after the Civil War. This pattern of the extended family reinforced community ties and through close cooperation and assistance allowed the individual nuclear family to survive comfortably on a minimum amount of land. The drastic reduction between 1870 and 1880 in the proportion of cove farmers who were tenants is further explained by this expanding kinship structure. Few families would allow their relatives to remain tenants or to be without the basic necessities of life. Because of the high fertility of the soil and the assistance from their extended family, few cove families were unable to survive the general depression of agricultural prices on farms as small as ten acres or less in size.[43]

Obviously this self-sufficiency was communal, not individual, and did not obviate the continuing necessity of finding a marketable crop after the Civil War. Without some continuing demand for such products as the weak market provided after 1870, the larger family units would have faced economic ruin, and with them their many dependent relatives. So the small farmer had an indirect, but nevertheless vital stake in the continuation of the market economy.[44] In selling his crops in Knoxville, the small farmer was also assured shared transportation with some of his wealthier relatives because of this close communal structure. Thus much

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[43] 1880 Census, Agriculture, Blount County; W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 79-80. See also an article by J. W. Oliver entitled "Cades Cove" in the Maryville Times, September 15, 1932.

[44] J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 15-18.

if not most of their agricultural production continued to be marketed after the Civil War; the structure of transporting the goods, and the market demands might have been substantially altered, but the net effect was still a viable market economy.

* The fact that the elaborate kinship structure controlled the economy of Cades Cove after the Civil War and did not allow, as so often happened in other sections of the South, the small farmer to fall completely into a pattern of subsistence farming, is further documented by the close proximity in which many of these extended families lived. One notable example in the middle of the cove was actually named Myerstown, because members of that family lived there so close to one another.[45] This geographic concentration of families added to the convenience of joint marketing ventures and other forms of collective economic cooperation. Adjacent relatives in poor circumstances might be a source of constant complaint on the part of wealthier members of a particular family, but it was equally true that such families were never allowed to starve.

The economic disadvantages of such an elaborate kinship structure were evident in the drastic reduction of new families entering the cove after the Civil War.[46] There were other reasons, of course, for this decline in immigration, including the general postwar depression of the region. But it is also evident that after 1865 few new families, especially those with no relatives there, chose to come in and compete

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[45] Interview with John W. Oliver, July 19, 1963.

[46] 1870 Census, Population, Blount County; 1880 Census, Population, Blount County.

with the well-established kinship structure. This situation is in marked contrast to the numerous immigrants, often from foreign countries, who had entered the cove during the 1840's and 1850's.[47]

The economic decline after the Civil War determined the type as well as the extent of emigration from the cove. Prewar emigrants usually had considerably more holdings than did those leaving after 1865. During the prosperous prewar decades emigrants were in the mainstream of the Westward movement, and often went to new lands opening up in Missouri or farther west. In contrast, postwar emigrants usually moved into neighboring communities seldom more than fifty miles away.[48] The obvious conclusion is that postwar emigrants did not have the necessary funds, even when they sold out their holdings in the cove, to move very far.

The basic cereal market crops raised in the cove were corn, wheat, oats, and rye. Corn remained the most important single crop throughout the century, since it could be used for home consumption, sold directly in Knoxville, or fed to the livestock. In 1850, thirty-three out of forty-four cove farmers in the census of that year grew corn. They produced 27,580 bushels, or 788 bushels per farmer growing corn. In

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[47] 1850 Census, Population, Blount County.

[48] According to J. W. Oliver's mail route directory in 1904, families left Cades Cove for new homes in other parts of Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, or Arkansas. These forwarding addresses clearly indicate that the pattern of emigration was still affected in the twentieth century by the poverty of the postwar decades. The development of an elaborate kinship structure might have also prevented many of these people from travelling further away from the cove, but all evidence points to primarily economic limitations. J. W. Oliver's Carrier's Route Directory, 1904, in possession of author. For a discussion of families who emigrated farther west during the more prosperous years, 1905-1914, see Edwards and Frizzell, The "Connection," i-iii.

1860, all twenty farmers grew corn, producing 17,750 bushels, or 887.5 bushels per farmer. By 1880, sixty-five out of seventy-six farmers were producing 18,050 bushels, or only 277.69 bushels per farmer. Wheat, oats, and rye were grown to a lesser extent, and the pattern of production followed that of corn.[4] (See Table 2.)

Other crops produced in lesser but still marketable quantities included hay, clover seed, and other grass seed, and flax, used for home consumption as well as sold. Various garden products were sold, including peas, beans, and Irish and sweet potatoes. The cove proved to be excellent for the growth of various fruit trees, whose yield could be sold as produce or distilled into various brandies. Butter and eggs formed the staple product of exchange with the local store, but these items were also shipped to Knoxville in the fall along with other products. One family in the 1850 census reported making cheese, but the skill never became widespread in the cove, and no other census lists this product. Molasses, honey, and beeswax were produced in great quantities for sale in Knoxville. The value of forest products has been previously discussed, but it is interesting to note that by 1880, 1,411 cords of wood were produced, with the price of a cord averaging between 35 and 65 cents.[50]

Tobacco was also grown by many farmers for their own use and for sale. W. H. Oliver recalled how his father, Elijah, prepared his tobacco:

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[49]1850 Census, Agriculture, Blount County; 1860 Census, Agriculture, Blount County; 1880 Census, Agriculture, Blount County.

[50]Ibid.

TABLE 2

CEREAL PRODUCTION, 1850-1880

	1850	1860	1880
WHEAT, bushels of	1,695	1,562	1,811
Per Farmer growing wheat	73.7	97.63	54.88
RYE, bushels of	—	125	47
Per Farmer growing rye	—	41.67	11.75
CORN, bushels of	27,580	17,750	18,050
Per Farmer growing corn	788	887.5	277.69
OATS, bushels of	6,880	5,400	3,080
Per Farmer growing oats	208.48	300	83.24

Source: Compiled from Agricultural Schedules, 1850, 1860, and 1880 Census, Blount County, Tennessee.

> My father was a great tobacco user and would maneuver him a good patch so his tobacco would not fail. He would worm and succor it until it would get ripe. He always cut and hung his tobacco in the shade to cure, and when it was well cured he would hand it off in bunches and pack it down in large gums and pack old quilts or cloths around it so it would keep in case all winter. He then loved to set up of nights till eight, nine or ten o'clock and stem and twist tobacco . . . .
>
> Pa had a tobacco prise a hole cut through a tree and a heavy log beam went through it. He would fill up a gum with twists and set it under his log prise and let it down on his tobacco, and then put a sled load of rocks on his beam and leave it until it be so hard when it would come out it would never get dry and crumley. This was the way he made his money. He would sell his tobacco made this way, all over the county and in N. C. He sold it at twenty-five cents per pound. He made so much of it that three twists would weigh a pound.[51]

The prewar livestock industry in the cove was larger and more prosperous than in surrounding East Tennessee counties, primarily because of the availability of extended grazing land in the mountains. In 1860 the average number of cattle per farm, for instance, was nearly four times greater in the cove than in other parts of the region. (See Table 3.) The grazing activities of most of the cove people and the accessibility of this large mountain range used by farmers throughout the area has already been discussed. It should be pointed out, however, that this section of East Tennessee was at the crossroads of an important cattle drive from the South and West before the war. According to Gray, many herders stopped in these fertile cove areas to fatten their cattle before taking them on to market in Knoxville. So the cove certainly

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[51] W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 35-37.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF LIVESTOCK, 1850-1880

	1850	1860	1880
HORSES	164	122	98
Per Farm	2.93	6.42	1.29
ASSES & MULES	34	25	22
Per Farm	.61	1.32	.29
MILK COWS	139	145	152
Per Farm	2.48	7.63	2
WORKING OXEN	47	17	17
Per Farm	.84	.89	.22
OTHER CATTLE	407	373	329
Per Farm	7.27	19.63	4.33
SHEEP	495	339	698
Per Farm	8.84	17.84	9.18
SWINE	1,425	1,080	1,093
Per Farm	25.45	56.84	14.38
VALUE OF LIVESTOCK	$18,261	$21,445	$13,499
Per Farm	$326.09	$1,128.68	$177.62

Source: Compiled from Agricultural Schedules, 1850, 1860, and 1880 Census, Blount County, Tennessee.

benefited from the influx of herders from other areas of the state and larger region.[52]

Sufficient evidence has been offered in Tables 2 and 3 to reach some broader generalizations about the economy of the cove as reflected in the agricultural schedules of the 1850, 1860, and 1880 census. From all indications, it is evident that although the cove witnessed a decline in overall population between 1850 and 1860 from 671 to 296 people, the general prosperity of the average cove farmer greatly increased during the decade. By 1880, however, the economy had declined drastically in every area, from livestock to basic cereal crops. To cite only one example, the number of horses per farm in 1850 was 2.9. That ratio had gone up to 6.1 horses per farm by 1860, but dropped drastically to 1.3 horses in 1880. All available evidence points to the great economic devastation caused by the Civil War.[53]

Unfortunately the 1870 agricultural schedule is missing from the census of that year. Other evidence, such as the deeds and legal transactions during this period, indicates that the drastic decline in the cove's economy did not suddenly occur after the war, but was rather a steady decline between the years 1865 and 1880. If this hypothesis is correct, the cove economy would be coordinated with the larger economy

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[52]For comparative data on livestock in other East Tennessee counties, see Blanche Henry Clark, The Tennessee Yeoman, 1840-1860 (Nashville, 1942), 193. 1850 Census, Agriculture, Blount County; 1860 Census, Agriculture, Blount County; 1880 Census, Agriculture, Blount County; Gray, Agriculture, II, 840-41, 883.

[53]1850 Census, Agriculture, Blount County; 1860 Census, Agriculture, Blount County; 1880 Census, Agriculture, Blount County.

of East Tennessee, which followed a similar pattern.[54] In any event, the steady economic decline in the three decades after 1865 is the single most notable event in the economic history of nineteenth century Cades Cove.

The second important generalization about the cove economy is that in spite of this drastic postwar decline, it remained market-oriented. The total number of cattle and swine produced in 1880 compares favorably with the number being produced before the war. Cattle were certainly produced largely for market. In the fall of each year, many cove inhabitants slaughtered beef and shared it with their many neighbors and relatives. But at other times, because of the difficulty in preserving the meat, cattle were not widely used as a food supply by the inhabitants themselves.[55]

There are numerous other examples in the 1880 census to indicate that the postwar economy still produced many items which by their very nature and quantity had to be marketed. No better illustration of this situation exists than the rapid increase in the production of sheep. By 1880, wool had become an important market product from the cove. In that year, 1,320 pounds of wool were produced, averaging 17.37 pounds per farm. In 1860 a total of 339 sheep were listed; by 1880, the total

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[54]U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900: Agriculture, Part I, 694-95, 703. See above, footnote 7, Chapter II. The agricultural depression was accentuated by the great postwar depression which began in 1873. Lanhan, Type-Of-Farming Regions, 60. See also Blount Deeds, 1860-1880, passim.

[55]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 6.

had risen to 698.[56] This increase in the number of sheep grown is directly correlated to the increase in the market demand; obviously the cove people had not increased their own use of either mutton or wool during the interval. That the cove economy could adjust, in the midst of such a great depression, to the changing market demands, is mute testimony to the continuing viability of the market economy.

Distilling became an important industry for some of the cove people who lived in the outlying regions, particularly in the area at the southwest end of the cove known as Chestnut Flats. Before the war, Julius Gregg owned a large distillery, processing apples and corn. After the war, George Powell "operated one of the most elaborate distilleries in Blount County" here, maintaining an orchard of several hundred fruit trees and manufacturing fine brandies. According to the Maryville Index, September 18, 1878, a revenuer raid at his place destroyed eleven tubs of beer and mash, four tubs of pomace, 130 gallons of "singlings," five bushels of meal, two bushels of rye, and two bushels of malt. Forty shots were exchanged in this encounter, but the "engineer of the mash mill" escaped unharmed.[57] Powell's "apple wagon" was one of the most popular attractions when he came to market in Maryville during court week; "he always had choice quarters at the livery stable where he slept close to his wagon."[58]

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[56] 1860 Census, Agriculture, Blount County; 1880 Census, Agriculture, Blount County.

[57] Maryville Index, September 18, 1878; Shields, "Cades Cove," 107.

[58] Burns, Blount County, 243, 276.

The humor with which such stories of distilling in the cove were later related distorts, however, the very serious social, economic, and moral questions which divided the community over this industry. The Baptist church early expressed its uncompromising disapproval of distilling and through its great influence succeeded in keeping distilleries out of the cove proper. This attitude of the majority of substantial farmers forced those who wished to make liquor to remove to the outlying areas where there was a plentiful supply of cold water for their operations. In retaliation for distilling, the community ostracized these people and attempted to cut them completely off from the intense communal life of the cove.[59]

This social division was reinforced by the terrain of the cove. Market crops, such as corn and wheat, did not grow well in the less fertile subcommunity of Chestnut Flats. All types of fruit trees, on the other hand, grew very well there; so there was a natural incentive to make whiskey. Wils Burchfield, who moved to the Flats shortly before the Civil War, already had anti-establishment ideas and attitudes which combined with the nature of the soil and terrain to incline the Flats people toward distilling. Isolated from the mainstream of the cove community, these people became outcasts and developed a lifestyle particularly repugnant to the cove majority.[60]

The social dichotomy of Chestnut Flats indicates again how inextricably social and cultural mores were bound up in the way in which

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[59]Gamble, Heritage and Folk Music, 67-69; Douglas, "People of Cades Cove," 80.

[60]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 8-9.

the cove people made their living. This situation was further complicated after the Civil War when the United States government attempted to enforce its internal revenue laws, and the state of Tennessee began passing a series of restrictive measures leading toward prohibition.[61] When distilling became illegal in other parts of the state, the cove's natural isolation would make illegal distilling a profitable and tempting occupation. Yet the uncompromising position of the pietistic majority in the cove continued unaltered, and the force of civil law was now added to their moral objections. Much of the bloodshed which occurred in the community after the war resulted from this basic division over making whiskey; the opposition of the cove majority made the trade difficult if not unprofitable, since they frequently cooperated with the federal revenue officers in disclosing the location of stills.[62]

The daily life of the average cove farmer in the nineteenth century seems from all accounts to have been one of unmitigated labor. The

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[61]The best analysis of prohibition legislation in Tennessee is Paul E. Isaac, Prohibition and Politics: Turbulent Decades in Tennessee, 1885-1920 (Knoxville, 1965). For a discussion of the great increase in illicit distilling in the mountainous areas of East Tennessee after the Civil War, see Grace Leab, The Temperance Movement in Tennessee, 1860-1907 (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1938), 7-30; Nashville Daily American, February 8, 1880; Leslie F. Roblyer, The Road to State-Wide Prohibition in Tennessee, 1899-1909 (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1949), 1-48.

[62]Douglas, "People of Cades Cove," 80-81; Gamble, Heritage and Folk Music, 69. As Isaac points out, the prohibition cause had its stronghold in East Tennessee, the section of the state most noted for illicit distilling. Isaac, Prohibition and Politics, 55. The division in Cades Cove is reflected in Blount County, which as early as 1837 had a monthly magazine, the Temperance Banner, edited by Darius Hoyt and dedicated to the prohibition cause. Burns, Blount County, 227.

great fertility of the soil was always an incentive to raise a surplus of crops for the market. In addition, the impulse of their religious beliefs gave value to hard work as meritorious in itself. Most farmers spent the greater part of the day in such heavy tasks as plowing, planting, or harvesting crops, mending fences, or feeding the livestock. Even the late hours of the day were occupied in various smaller tasks, such as repairing harnesses or making shoes for the family. John W. Oliver recalled the family at work in the evening:

> Mother would card wool and spin it into yarns and weave it into cloth to clothe the family. The older children, both girls and boys, were taught to assist her in this work. I have quilled the thread for the shuttle many times while she wove it into cloth. Mother was never happier than when she was in the loom or turning the spinning wheel.
>
> At the same time, father would be busy making or mending shoes for the family. Some of the children would sometimes hold a rich pine torch-light to give more light in the house. The hot rosin would drop on our hands or toes and how we would jump! Sometimes we dropped the torch. If the torch began to get dim we would snub it on the dog irons to remove the burned coals, like snubing the ashes from a cigarette.[63]

From this description it is evident that women worked equally long hours as men at difficult tasks. Usually the type of work women did was confined to domestic duties—cooking, sewing, and weaving—in the home. Occasionally, however, women performed heavier tasks such as plowing, but this behavior was considered exceptional and was justified only by the absence of an able-bodied male. Usually unable to share in the masculine outlet of hunting and fishing in the surrounding mountains, the cove women partially compensated for the utilitarian routine of

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[63]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 4-5.

their daily lives through the beautiful quilts they pieced and the wool coverlets made in many colors and designs. Women were also taught how to use rifles, in case of any emergency, and were generally familiar with most of the men's chores.[64] Thus, while labor usually followed traditional divisions according to sex, it was deemed necessary by the community that each individual should at least be familiar with the duties and tasks performed by the opposite sex.

Children were an important part of the labor force. They were trained at an early age to perform a wide variety of jobs, so that the family could work together as a unit. Throughout the century, cove families were large. If married children did not move away, as was increasingly the case after the Civil War, the larger family formed an extended labor pool, to which grandchildren were eventually added. The number of children per family is difficult to determine accurately from the census records alone, since the infant mortality rate was high, and children married at an early age and established their own homes. Six

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[64] A notable example of a woman who performed men's work was Aunt Becky Cable, daughter of John P. Cable. "Rebecca was a very strong woman physically. She never chose to get married, but lived a clean industrious Christian life. She lived to be ninety-six years old. She did more work than the average man. She could handle stock and tools, on the farm or in the woods. She ran her father's mill many years doing the work herself. She rode all over the Smoky Mountains looking after the livestock. She was honest, industrious, and upright in all her dealings. She lived a life far above board and was loved and respected by all with whom she came into contact." J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 2-3. Aunt Becky's life style was described by Vic Weals in the Knoxville Journal, August 17, 1960. She died in 1944. Shields, "Cades Cove," 107.

to eight children per family was average; fifteen was considered large, but not unusual.[65]

Although tenant farming declined after the Civil War, some of the larger farmers continued the practice of hiring laborers for fixed periods to work on their farms. In 1880, when only eight out of seventy-six farmers hired others to work on their farms, the pay was extremely low, averaging between $2.00 and $3.00 for a week's work. Many cove farmers worked several weeks each year for these larger farmers in order to obtain extra cash before they sold their own crops in Knoxville. Not until the end of the century did sawmilling become a widespread source of additional income.[66]

For the average farmer who could not afford to hire labor during harvest or an emergency, the community responded collectively. John McCaulley outlined this collective response as he remembered it during the last decade of the nineteenth century:

> We looked after one another. If there was sickness in a family and a crop needed working, we'd all hear about it at church on Sunday.

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[65] 1850 Census, Population, Blount County; 1860 Census, Population, Blount County, 1870 Census, Population, Blount County, 1880 Census, Population, Blount County; W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 18-29.

[66] 1880 Census, Agriculture, Blount County; Burns, Blount County, 229-31. Although the Shields Mill and the Cable Mill produced lumber for local use, it was not until the Little River Lumber Company went into operation in 1901 and the Little River Railroad built extensions onto Eldorado Creek and Laurel Creek into the Cades Cove section that commercial sawmilling began seriously to deplete forests around the cove to supply a national market. See also Ayres and Ashe, "Southern Appalachian Forests," 176.

> The next morning, on Monday morning, there'd be as many as 50 neighbors in that field and around that house doing up everything that had to be done.
>
> If somebody died, everybody left his own work and turned his attention to the dead person's family. There wouldn't be a single person working in those fields in the Cades Cove bottoms until the funeral was over.
>
> If a widow was left, she and her children were cared for. Everybody saw to it that they didn't want for a thing.
>
> The older folks were taken care of, too, when they couldn't work no more. Nobody went to the poorhouse.[67]

Many larger projects were undertaken through community effort. Barns were raised, houses built, and new fields were cleared by the community working together. Again the intesne communal life of Cades Cove dominated the labor market, and no individual farmer ever had to face a particularly large task alone. In one sense, this system might have contributed to the low level of wages which the average farm laborer received, but in the long run it benefited everyone, since all were engaged primarily in farming.

The division of labor remained limited during the first three decades after 1818. There were individuals in the community whose skill at some particular task—cabinet-making, carpentry, coffin-making, or blacksmithing—created a demand for these specialized services. In the majority of cases, however, these men were basically farmers who practiced their trade as a sideline. Peter Cable's services were always in demand, for instance, as a carpenter or tool-maker, but he kept his farm as a basic source of income and listed his occupation in the census as a farmer.[68]

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[67] Knoxville Journal, August 17, 1960.

[68] J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 25-26; 1860 Census, Population, Blount County.

By 1850, the census recorded a variety of highly specialized trades in the cove, reflecting the growing wave of immigrants from widely divergent parts of the United States and Europe. There were five carpenters from Holland, three mechanics from England, a lawyer from Pennsylvania, a physician from New York, and a boatswain from North Carolina, in addition to the usual farmers, millers, and blacksmiths listed. By 1860, most of these people were gone, but one additional occupation was listed—that of bell-maker.[69]

The presence in 1850 of these men with specialized skills is something of a puzzle in an essentially agrarian society. The best explanation for their attraction to the cove is to be found in the extensive mining operations being undertaken there and in the surrounding mountains. Largely forgotten in the twentieth century, swarms of prospectors entered the area during the 1850's, were disappointed in their search for gold and other minerals, and moved on to other mining areas leaving few records of their undertakings. One such mine was located on Rich Mountain between Cades Cove and Tuckaleechee Cove in a small valley inappropriately mamed Eldorado. Local historians have concentrated on describing the iron industry in this area, but it is evident from the following letter, written in 1847 by Dr. Isaac Anderson, founder of Maryville College, that other minerals were actively being sought:

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[69]1850 Census, Population, Blount County; 1860 Census, Population, Blount County.

> The discovery has lately been made, that our country is full of coal, zinc, copper, tin, perhaps much silver, and surely many rich lead veins, and probably much gold. A pretty general interest is excited, and a good many shafts are being sunk.[70]

Mills were probably the single most important industry throughout the century, because everyone needed to have grains, corn or wheat, ground to make bread. Dr. Jobe recalled that during the 1820's "it was two or three years before we had mills suitable to make flour; the only mills we had were little 'Tub mills' to crack corn. Father built a mill soon after we moved there, but it was seldom one saw wheat bread on any table there." In 1850 there were references to Foute's mill and Emert's mill, but in 1854 one writer complained that cove inhabitants still had to "go 15 or 20 miles to get flour fit to eat."[71]

There is frequent mention of these small tub mills before 1840. Robert Shields moved from Georgia to the cove in 1835 and built a tub mill on Forge Creek two miles east of Chestnut Flats. Daniel D. Foute had built a similar structure on his farm during the early 1830's. These tub mills were evidently widely scattered throughout the cove before 1840, but they were too small to receive mention in any of the census statistics.[72]

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[70] Dr. Anderson believed that mineral wealth from the mountains could be used to support "thousands of missionaries, and to establish on the coast of Africa a republic of civilized and Christianized people of color." Isaac Anderson to ? , January 7, 1847, quoted in John J. Robinson, Memoir of Rev. Isaac Anderson, D. D. (Knoxville, 1860), 155.

[71] Jobe, Autobiography, 19-20; Edwards and Frizzell, The "Connection," 239.

[72] J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, III, 1-2.

During the 1840's, Frederick Shields, son of Robert, built the first overshot wheel structure which replaced the smaller turbine mills. This large structure housed "equipment for milling and bolting wheat flour . . . with one of the largest native stone rocks in the Smoky Mountains for grinding corn, as well as a sash saw for lumber production." The Shields Mill gave the community a much greater sense of self-sufficiency, since it was no longer necessary to carry wheat to Tuckaleechee Cove to be ground. It also centralized milling, reducing the number of turbine mills in the cove. Shield's, and later Cable's, mill became a gathering place for the community.[73]

The largest mill was built by John P. Cable, a nephew of Peter, who moved to Cades Cove from Carter County in 1865 at the close of the war. He bought land and settled in the lower end of the cove near the junction of Forge and Mill Creeks. The rather elaborate nature and construction of the Cable Mill in 1868 is described by John W. Oliver:

> Soon after his arrival he began the development of water power by building a corn and wheat mill and also a saw mill. In order to get sufficient water power to pull all this machinery he dug a canal to run Forge Creek into Mill Creek just above his mill. This required quite a lot of labor because it all had to be done with pick and shovel. It also required building two dams, one on Forge Creek just below the Old Forge site to turn the water into the canal and another on Mill Creek where the canal emptied into Mill Creek. From this last dam he built a long rase or floom to carry the water to the overshot wheel which pulled the machinery. So in time he completed his enterprise, lifted the floom gate, and turned on the water. The huge overshot wheel began to turn and his plant was set

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[73]Shields, "Cades Cove," 108; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 1-3. Frederick married Mary Oliver, the oldest daughter of John and Lucretia Oliver. J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 15.

in motion. For many long years he did a thriving business. In addition to this he ran his farm and raised livestock.[74]

The first mercantile business in the cove was started in 1873 by Leason Gregg from Johnson County, Tennessee, in a room in his dwelling house. Gregg later built a store on the Cable farm, the first store built in the cove. He bought the cove people's produce and sold them dry goods and staples, such as sugar, coffee, and salt. Once a week he took produce to Knoxville and returned with general merchandise. For most people it was an advantage to have the mill and store so close together, because they could shop while their corn or wheat was being ground.[75]

Earlier, cove residents had relied upon George Snider's store in Tuckaleechee Cove as previously mentioned. During the 1840's, Daniel D. Foute at his hotel at Montvale Springs also operated a mercantile business which was patronized by the cove people. The fact that a permanent store came as late as 1873 indicates that the market economy was slowing down during the depression following the war. In earlier times farmers had made frequent trips to sell their goods in Maryville and Knoxville and had bought merchandise there, thereby making the construction of a general store in the cove largely unnecessary. In this sense, Gregg's first store in 1873 is one indication of the general retrogression of the cove economy after the war.[76]

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[74] J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 1-3.

[75] Ibid., 2.

[76] Ibid.; George Snider's Store Account Book, passim.

The iron industry developed very early in Cades Cove, and references to "forge tracts" in deeds during the 1820's indicated that mineral interests had initially attracted the attention of several entrepreneurs. The first forge to begin operations in Blount County was the Cades Cove Bloomary Forge, built in 1827 by Daniel D. Foute. Earlier mining had been undertaken by William Tipton, who sold the site to Foute. The forge was located near the point where the millrace now leaves Forge Creek, and the ore was removed a mile northeast of this site. Coaling signs are still visible in the vicinity.[77]

The Cades Cove Bloomary Forge was only one of many such forges which sprang up in East Tennessee and Western North Carolina during the 1820's and 1830's. The low grade ore and expense of burning charcoal for these forges made them unprofitable in the long run, and Foute's operation closed in 1847.[78] The Foute forge was important to the cove's early economy for several reasons, however. It offered employment to many of the cove men during the years of its operation. Many farmers, under the direction of Peter Cable, made their own tools from the iron produced here. The forge was an incentive to Foute's road-building, since he needed reasonably cheap transportation to make the industry

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[77] Blount Deeds, 1821-1830, passim; Burns, Blount County, 276. Although Foute's forge is the only one recorded in Cades Cove, curious references in the deeds indicate that other forges were in operation there during the 1830's. One such deed mentions repaying a loan "at Shields own house in Cades Cove on which land is a forge." Robert Shields to Hugh Bogle, May 29, 1834, Blount Deeds, Book 5, p. 240. Possibly these forges were much smaller ones primarily for blacksmithing.

[78] For the best description of this type of bloomary forge and its operation, see Arthur, Western North Carolina, 277-79.

profitable. Finally, the discovery of iron ore here convinced other entrepreneurs that more valuable minerals might be located in the cove or its environs.[79]

Transportation for the cove's market economy was provided by various entrepreneurs for a wide variety of reasons. Long before white settlement, the area was intertwined by numerous Indian trails which continued to be used by white settlers, particularly the Ekanetelee Gap route to North Carolina and the old Indian Grave Gap trail across Rich Mountain to Tuckaleechee Cove. Expanding these older trails into roads large enough to allow wagons to travel them was often a gradual process which required many decades.[80]

John Oliver remembered that the first wagon which crossed the Cades Cove Mountain was held by eight men with ropes on both sides. The old Laurel Creek road, which left the northeast end of the cove and went through Schoolhouse Gap into Dry Valley, was also a route which remained extremely difficult for wagon passage, requiring an extra team of horses to pull any load over the mountain. Another route which was gradually improved until it achieved the status of a road was the Rabbit Creek

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[79]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 25; Shields, "Cades Cove," 107. Evidence of searches for other minerals is found in numerous leases to land in the cove during the 1850's. One example states clearly that "the lease is for the purpose of investigating for minerals, I to have one-half of whatever is taken out." William Rorex to B. O. Brabson and A. M. Wallace, January 1, 1854, Blount Deeds, Book X, p. 649.

[80]Myer, "Indian Trails," 772; Burns, "Settlement and Early History," 45.

road, which left the extreme southwest end of the cove and had its terminus in Happy Valley.[81] (See Figure 8, Appendix.)

The Rabbit Creek road and the old Laurel Creek road were built without any aid from the county, and no exact date can be given to their construction, although both were in use before 1860. Neither was used for extensive commercial traffic, but both provided easy access to neighboring communities. At various times during the cove's history these roads fell into disrepair. The Rabbit Creek road was remembered as the major exit for North Carolina guerillas herding stolen cattle and horses out of the cove.[82]

The most important road for commerce was built by Daniel D. Foute between Cades Cove and Maryville through Montvale Springs. Foute received permission to build this road, or turnpike, on January 25, 1852, from the Tennessee General Assembly:

> Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, That Daniel D. Foute be, and he is hereby authorized to open a turnpike road from some convenient point on Six Mile creek or Crooked creek, in said county, as he may find most practicable through Cade's Cove, to the North Carolina line, at or near E. Kannett's gap, in the Smokey Mountain, of the following description, to wit: Said Foute may first open said road four feet wide for the travel of horsemen or stock, and as soon as the travel and business of the road requires, or will justify the same, he shall open said road equal to the second class roads of the county; and said road he shall keep in the same repair as county roads are kept, and be subject to the same penalties, rules and regulations that overseers are under on like county roads.[83]

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[81] W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 5.

[82] Interview with John W. Oliver, August 7, 1963.

[83] Tennessee General Assembly, Private Acts, 1851-52, Ch. CCLXI. Hereafter cited Tenn. Acts, with appropriate year and chapter.

Later called the Cooper road, this route remained the main commercial egress to Knoxville and Maryville throughout the century. Foute was involved in numerous enterprises in the larger region, all of which would benefit by the construction of this road. The Cades Cove Bloomary Forge probably motivated its construction initially, although this industry had closed down by 1847. Foute envisioned other mining operations in the cove, however, which would require cheap transportation. This road also connected the resort hotel at Montvale Springs, which Foute operated between 1832 and 1850, to Cades Cove.[84]

Foute also built a road in 1852 from the cove out through Chestnut Flats in the southwest end to intersect Parson's Turnpike to North Carolina. This road aided farmers in taking corn to Julius Gregg's distillery in Chestnut Flats, but never became a major commercial artery into North Carolina. As mentioned earlier, no market comparable to Knoxville existed in Western North Carolina. Moreover, road-building was extremely difficult there because of the terrain, the rivers were unnavigable, and little commercial development existed to lure cove farmers over the high mountains. In contrast, the Cooper road followed an easy grade forty miles to Knoxville, the major commercial center of upper East Tennessee throughout the century.[85]

Attempts to build roads across the Great Smoky Mountains were made for other than commercial reasons. One such venture was undertaken

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[84]Burns, Blount County, 80; Blount Deeds, 1840-1860, passim.

[85]Burns, Blount County, 41; Shields, "Cades Cove," 107; Arthur, Western North Carolina, 230.

during the 1840's by Dr. Isaac Anderson. This route passed through Schoolhouse Gap out of Tuckaleechee Cove, and around Boat Mountain. According to his biographer, Dr. Anderson undertook this construction "with a view to increased means of carrying forward his project of educating young men for the ministry," since this route would open up the back country to missionaries. The road was also intended to assist the Cherokee, who furnished the labor for its construction. Only the Tennessee portion was completed, "due to the energy with which Dr. A. pushed forward the work."[86] This road, which approached the head of Cades Cove, was built "in the expectation that a road from the mouth of Chambers creek, below Bushnel, would be built over into the Hazel creek settlement, and thence up the Foster ridge and through the Haw gap to meet it." Unfortunately North Carolina failed to do its part, and the Anderson road was finally abandoned.[87]

With five roads out of the cove by 1860, including the Foute road to Knoxville and Maryville which gave the cove people easy access to regional markets for their crops and livestock, it is not surprising that the technological development of the cove, particularly in farm machinery, kept pace with the rest of Blount County. The boom period in obtaining modern farm equipment evidently occurred during the 1850's, although most farmers gradually recovered in the three decades after the

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[86]Robinson, Memoir, 153.

[87]Arthur, Western North Carolina, 241.

Civil War and by 1890 were able to afford new equipment coming on the market.[88] At mid-century, the total value of farm implements and machinery was listed as being $3,119, or $55.69 worth of equipment per farm. By 1860, the value of farm machinery had risen to $5,345, despite the drastic reduction in population, and the worth of equipment per farm averaged $267.25. Two decades later, the value of farm machinery had dropped to $2,306, averaging $30.34 worth of equipment per farm.[89]

Yet despite the drop in the value of farm machinery after the war, there were always many farmers who could afford the newest equipment. Again, the communal, or collective nature of the cove economy determined that such equipment would be shared by a wide variety of poorer friends and relatives. An excellent example of this sort of sharing was the telephone station which Dan Lawson constructed during the 1890's. The wealthiest man in the cove at that time, he organized several of his neighbors to construct a phone line across the mountains to Maryville. Several homes had phones, and the phone at Lawson's store was available to everyone in the cove. Another excellent example of this collective activity was the graded road built in 1890 across Rich Mountain by volunteer labor from the cove and county funds.[90]

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[88]Miscellaneous Notes on Cades Cove, pp. 8-10, written June 1, 1948, by John W. Oliver, in author's possession. Hereafter cited J. W. Oliver, Notes, with appropriate page numbers.

[89]1850 Census, Agriculture, Blount County; 1860 Census, Agriculture, Blount County; 1880 Census, Agriculture, Blount County.

[90]Shields, "Cades Cove," 105; J. W. Oliver, Notes, 14-15.

The role of the cove's leading entrepreneur, Daniel D. Foute, has already been outlined. Foute served as clerk of the circuit court of Blount County from 1822 until 1836, and was in an excellent position to learn of any new land being offered for sale. He built the main road from Cades Cove to Maryville in the 1850's, and had opened the cove's first industry, his bloomary forge, in 1827. Engaged in a wide variety of business ventures and speculations, many of them connected with the cove, Foute was interested in the mineral wealth of the surrounding mountains, and in developing agriculture in the cove by introducing new fruit trees and experimental crops. His purchase of large tracts of land in the cove and surrounding mountains made him a preeminent land speculator both in Blount County and in the larger region.[91]

After Foute decided to build his home, "Paradise Lost," in the cove in 1849, this energetic and capable man seemed to transfer his main interest to the community. The following year he sold his interests in the resort hotel at Montvale Springs and seemed to concentrate his efforts on buying up land in the cove and surrounding region until the Civil War. Although he remained a man of comparative sophistication and wide vision, Foute took an active interest in the community and was willing to help any of the cove people with a variety of civic problems. He served as justice of the peace, and acted as legal advisor for the community. His adherence to the Confederate cause during the war ran counter to the political beliefs of most of the cove inhabitants. Yet

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[91] Blount Deeds, 1826-1860, passim.

even the bitterness ensuing from this conflict did not completely destroy the respect and esteem in which he was held by the community. It is important to point out that his death, resulting from being dragged by federal troops from his sick-bed in the cove to Knoxville in 1865, was caused by his alienation from prominent East Tennessee Unionists, such as his former friend Parson Brownlow, not by any hostile act on the part of the people of Cades Cove.[92]

An entrepreneur of less importance was Dr. Calvin Post, a physician and mineralogist who came to the cove in 1846 from Elmira, New York. Dr. Post was crippled by an accident en route when the steam boat which he was aboard exploded on the Mississippi River, killing one of his brothers who was accompanying him. Recovering from this accident at the home of William Thompson in Maryville, he married one of the daughters of his host, Marth Wallace Thompson, in the autumn of 1846. Shortly thereafter, they moved to the cove, where Dr. Post established his home, "Laurel Springs":

> It was a kind of botanical garden; a horticultural Eden. There were beautiful native trees. There were walks and driveways bordered with trees. There were flowers in beds branching out from the house. There were acres in vegetable gardens and other acres in fruit trees . . . apples, pears, raspberries, gooseberries, blackberries. There were crystal-clear brooks and creeks which added charm and Nature's own music.[93]

Although he was interested in a wide variety of scientific phenomena ranging from astronomy to geology, Dr. Post's primary interest in the

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[92]Burns, Blount County, 65.

[93]From an unpublished Family History compiled and written by Dr. Post's granddaughter, Jessie Eugenia Turner, Chattanooga, Tennessee.

cove was exploring and exploiting its mineral wealth. He represented New York mineral companies, and his correspondence is filled with pleas to get capital investment into the cove. His Notebook for 1849 reveals a knowledge of geology and mineralogy surprising for nineteenth century America; whether he obtained his medical and scientific training in Holland, as his family believes, has not been verified. At any rate, Dr. Post was certainly the first scientist comprehensively to study and chart the geologic structure of the cove and its environs.[94]

From his numerous descriptions of hidden veins in the cove's geologic structure, it is apparent that Post believed that the area contained rich deposits of gold and silver. Earlier he had visited Dahlonega, Georgia, during the gold rush there, and was familiar with techniques for mining gold. He was interested, of course, in other minerals such as copper and iron, and his correspondence with his New York investors reveals a cost-analysis approach to mining in the cove. He argued, for instance, that even if gold or silver were not found, the cost of mining would be recovered by an abundance of less valuable minerals. As a physician, he asserted that the vein waters from these mines "will in the healing art be much prized when proved and recommended by the scientific profession in dispepsical and liver diseases." "This much abused vein," he

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[94]Interview with Miss Jonnie Post, a great-granddaughter of Dr. Post, April 9, 1975. Miss Post has in her home in Maryville, Tennessee, an extensive collection of Dr. Post's correspondence, reports, notebooks, and photographs, which she kindly allowed me to inspect. Born March 21, 1803, in Elmira, New York, Post was of Dutch extraction, the son of James and Alyea Hathorne Post. During the 1850's, he acquired several tracts of land of 5,000 and 10,000 acres each in the mountains surrounding the cove. Blount Deeds, 1850-1860, passim.

concluded, "will in time give great employment to laborers and wealth to the owners."[95]

Dr. Post never discovered gold in the cove, but his presence there until his death in 1873 furnished the inhabitants with an excellent physician. The interrelationship between his medical and geologic knowledge is illustrated in the following 1850 excerpt from his Notebook, which also includes his explanation of the Balds:

> The balds are not caused by the extreme elevation too many mountains in this Apalachian chain by an immense vein of arsenical copper ore the outcropping indicate it and facts prove the existence the bare streak at dry season show the arsenic and cattle lick it with their salt and are poisoned and die from its effects and familys have it with milk sickness. Jesse Birchfield and family are living witness of this fact. . . . The cause of dead lands in Cades Cove is also from the escape of arsenical vapors from either deposits of Galena or copper mineralized by copper for any practical miner or mineralogist can trace large veins of this to and beyond the alluvial deposit, drain it and you can reach these deposits of gold and copper.[96]

The only individual who approached the status of an entrepreneur in the cove after the Civil War was Dan Lawson, who married the only daughter of Peter Cable, took over the Cable farm after the older man's death in 1866, and expanded it into one of the largest holdings in the cove. These holdings "extended from mountain top to mountain top, one-half mile wide, across the center of the valley." Although Lawson had a

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[95]Dr. Calvin Post's Notebook, 1849-1851, in possession of Miss Jonnie Post, Maryville, Tennessee. Hereafter cited Post's Notebook. Post was a close friend of Dr. Isaac Anderson, whose only son married Martha Thompson, Mrs. Post's sister. Both men shared a broad interest in the mineral wealth of the cove and surrounding mountains, and often took leases on large amounts of land there. Blount Deeds, 1849-1860, passim.

[96]Post's Notebook, 1850.

general store and operated the post office for many years, he never had the wealth, know-how, or vision significantly to expand the economy of the cove as Foute had done.[97]

One scholar has written that the years before the Civil War were the "Golden Age" of Tennessee agriculture, and that the next fifty years after the war were spent in trying to recover progress which had been made during the booming years of the 1840's and 1850's. The cove certainly followed this larger regional pattern in its economic growth, whether judged by the number of new settlers entering the area after 1865, the value of land and farm machinery, or the size of cove farms. In comparative terms, the average cove farmer closely fits the description of Blanche Henry Clark's yeoman farmer in East Tennessee between 1840 and 1860. If cove farmers could buy such a wide variety of goods from George Snider's store in Tuckaleechee Cove in the decade after the war, however, they still maintained their status as yeomen with a tenuous, yet still very viable, relationship to the regional market economy.[98]

Perhaps David M. Potter's thesis that economic abundance had a pervasive influence in shaping the American character applied directly to the nineteenth century market economy of Cades Cove.[99] The fertility of the cove soil which allowed such an economy to develop tied the people closely to regional markets, and through these markets, to the

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[97]Shields, "Cades Cove," 105; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 26.

[98]Lanhan, Type-Of-Farming Regions, 61-62; Clark, Tennessee Yeoman, 34-161; Snider's Store Account Book, passim.

[99]David M. Potter, People of Plenty (Chicago, 1954), 189-208.

broad mainstreams of American political and social culture throughout the century. Without this prosperity, Cades Cove would have been no different in its development from patterns of poverty which characterized other sections of Southern Appalachia.

Entrepreneurs such as Daniel D. Foute and Dr. Calvin Post had great schemes for the cove's economic development before the Civil War, and their expectations and wide-ranging interests clearly identified them as a type of American businessman common in all sections of the country at mid-century. Even the economic devastation during the war and the depression afterward did not alter the cove's market orientation to the larger region. When this larger region began to show signs of recovery after 1900, the cove's economy would respond accordingly.

Cades Cove remained a small cog within the larger region's intricate patterns of trade, but this cog accurately reflected, during any given period, the condition of the larger machinery. How cove farmers imbibed political and social ideas as they sold their products in Knoxville or Maryville will be examined in later chapters. If larger regions in the country were influenced in their political thinking by conditions in the national market economy, however, it is logical to suppose that smaller areas such as the cove were similarly affected by current trends in such regional market places as Knoxville.

When cove farmers adjusted to the regional depression after the Civil War, they effected certain changes in the internal society and economy of the cove which were entirely indigenous. The geographic isolation combined with the regional depression and the developing

kinship structure resulted in an intense communal life style which determined internal economic distribution of goods and labor. In this sense, the postwar economy of the cove reflected a basic dichotomy. Outwardly market-oriented, internally they made every effort to distribute all the necessary components of life to needy friends and relatives. Whether this sort of communal life style could have developed in a less fertile area is open to question. But the result was so far-reaching that any examination of the cove's economic life must be focused within this much larger, and far more significant, sense of community which dominated all aspects of the average cove farmer's life throughout the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER IV

RELIGION AND THE CHURCHES

The dominant role of religion in the life of the average citizen of Cades Cove during the nineteenth century is evident from the large number of surviving documents and records relating to church activities. These records reveal an active and often absorbing inquiry throughout the century into religious questions which have a timeless quality about them. It is as though the problems, disputes, decisions, and organization of the church were being conducted in complete isolation from the many social and economic trends which characterized any given decade. Although the Civil War had a dramatic impact on the economic and social life of Cades Cove, this great conflict had only a temporary effect on the internal life of the church. Of much greater importance was the debate over missions during the late 1830's; the war was only a footnote, albeit an important one, in the totality of church history.

The Baptist church, its ideas and doctrine, represented a kind of "invisible government" monitoring the lives of the cove dwellers almost from the beginning of the community. Yet the whole question of religion is surrounded with complicated and seemingly irreconcilable contradictions. Determined in principle to remain separated and completely distinct from the civil government, the church nevertheless became so inextricably bound up in deciding crucial questions involving the local autonomy and moral leadership in the community that it was embroiled in

what became a political dispute during the Civil War and was forced on that account to end its meetings for the duration of the war.

After 1840, the Primitive Baptist church tried to isolate itself from the corrupting influences of the great changes in religious doctrine which were occurring among Baptists in other sections of the country. But the very act of trying to freeze their theology, to preserve the purity of their doctrine, caused them to confront other questions and debate issues in a dialectical process which led them almost against their will toward the formulation of new answers. This overriding impulse to keep their doctrinal purity led in turn to an amazing variety of smaller divisions and dissensions within the church toward the end of the century. Finally, although the church imposed its behavioral standards on most of the community, only a small part of the total cove population ever obtained membership.

Religion was introduced to the cove at an early date by the first settlers, John and Lucretia Oliver. Although neither of them had belonged to a church in Carter County, it is evident from the following passage from their grandson's sketches that both John and Lucretia were early exposed to some form of proselytism:

> After being married some few years, my Grandfather got under convictions for his sins and felt that he was not prepared to die and go unto Judgement. So he became wonderfully alarmed, day and night, he would get up of nights, and go out to pray. Granma said that one night he was out so much that she could not sleep and she thought he was going crazy. So she gets up and started to go around the house to look for him to tell him what she thought of such, and she said that as she went around the house, that she met him rejoicing in God his Savior, he told her that he had found the Lord and was happy, and that he wanted her to seek the Lord and be happy too and throwed his arms around her. She said that she fell to the ground and instead of telling him what she thought

> of such crazy spells, that she became crazy herself. She said that she never had any more rest untill she found the Lord herself. Thus they were both happy in the Lord. This was about the year 1819 or 20. It was not long after they came to this place, Cades Cove.[1]

In contrast to the indifference of many of their pioneer contemporaries to religion, the early efforts of the Olivers to obtain a religious organization in the cove are surprising, especially when one considers the many obstacles and greater problems involved in their initial settlement. Bishop Francis Asbury had earlier expressed the opinion that "it is as hard or harder for the people of the West to gain religion as any others," in view of the great difficulties and distractions of frontier life.[2] In this regard, the Olivers' success during the early 1820's in obtaining formal religious services in the cove placed a distinctive stamp on the community in its infancy.

Religion, as Asbury pessimistically pointed out, frequently seemed the antithesis of the usual style of frontier life in other areas of the old Southwest. Small log cabins often housed families of ten or twelve, who lived in a tumbled filthy atmosphere. One writer argued that

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[1] W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 6-7. Quotations from manuscript sources continue to be given with no changes in the original spelling or orthography. The conversion experience described here had long been a necessary requirement for church membership in practically all Protestant denominations. The theological assumptions underlying this experience are nowhere more lucidly analyzed than in Perry Miller, The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century (New York, 1939), 365-97. See also Alan Simpson, Puritanism in Old and New England (Chicago, 1955), 2-6, 24-25, 35-36, and Darrett B. Rutman, American Puritanism: Faith and Practice (Philadelphia, 1970), 15-16, 20, 26-27, 99-106.

[2] Elmer T. Clark, ed., The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury (3 vols., London, 1958), II, 125.

"scenes of bloodshed and partisan animosity" were common occurrences. Although Bishop Asbury saw these problems almost entirely from his own sectarian frame of reference, he was not blind to the practical effects of religion in preventing social disorder. Violence or bloodshed were anti-social acts committed not only against God, he concluded, but to the detriment of the entire community.[3]

In this sense, the early development of religious institutions in the cove may have prevented a period of anti-social individualism which characterized the contemporary frontier development of other communities in the larger region. Writers other than Asbury had long observed a direct connection between the lawlessness of frontier life and the distance of these isolated communities from more settled regions of the country. Judged by these standards alone, the cove because of its relative isolation might well have produced frontiersmen such as those Asbury so vividly described as poor creatures "but one remove from savages themselves."[4]

Despite the practical benefits of religion to their community, the Olivers evidently labored in vain to obtain a church in the cove during

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[3] Ibid., I, 709, II, 287; Walter B. Posey, Methodism in the Old Southwest (Tuscaloosa, 1933), 12-15. See also Allen James Ledford, Methodism in Tennessee, 1783-1866 (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1941), 34-36. The best contemporary description of the drunkenness, vice, gambling, brutal fights, and antagonism to itinerant preachers is found in W. P. Strickland, ed., Autobiography of Peter Cartwright, The Backwoods Preacher (New York, 1856), 45-83.

[4] William Warren Sweet, The Rise of Methodism in the West (New York, 1920), 58-70; Clark, Asbury's Journal, I, 632. Similar areas of North Carolina suffered a decline in organized religion from the close of the Revolution until after 1810. Lefler, History of North Carolina, I, 431.

the early 1820's. By the middle of the decade, however, they had succeeded in getting enough members to warrant holding services under the auspices of the Miller's Cove Baptist church in a neighboring community. The first reference to the cove in the Miller's Cove church records occurred on March 5, 1825:

> Brother Davis request the Church to visit in Church order in Cades Cove to receive members and the Church agree to go and set to wait on and appoint the Fourth Saterday of this Instant and appoint Brethern Augusteen Bowers, James Taylor, Wm. Blair, James Williams, Richard Williams, George Snider, Wm. McKey, Isaac Russell and two of them to site on a Church with members thats is there and so Dismist to First Saterday in Aprile at Meeting House.[5]

"In church order" meant that the presbytery from Miller's Cove was authorized to conduct church business in the cove. Numerous references in the following months indicated the Cades Cove members wanted to expand their membership. "Received a letter from Cades Cove for us to appoint a Church meeting among them in order to receive members" is a reference on May 6, 1825, which aptly characterizes this exchange of correspondence. On June 11, 1825, Lucretia Oliver joined the church, which now called itself the "Church of Christ of Miller's Cove in Cades Cove."[6]

The colonizing process of the Miller's Cove Baptist church revealed a number of interesting features about the basic organization of these churches and their relationship to one another. No single principle

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[5]Minutes of the Miller's Cove Baptist Church, Book II, March 5, 1825. A typescript copy of these records, which date from 1812, is in the McClung Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tennessee.

[6]Ibid., passim.

characterized them more accurately than the idea of local autonomy. Each Baptist church insisted on complete independence and freedom of action, and no challenge caused greater anger and theological denunciation among them than the slightest questioning of their independence. Yet they moved with great deliberation toward authorizing any of their members to establish a separate church with the same freedoms, although the distance and geographic isolation of the Cades Cove group obviously justified such a move.

Finally satisfied with the orthodoxy of the Cades Cove group, or perhaps merely weary of their importunings, the Miller's Cove church recorded on November 3, 1826, that "the members belonging to this church who live in Cades Cove have petitioned for letters of dismission and it is granted." Although they remained on good terms with the Miller's Cove church, the Cades Cove group obtained their letters of dismission in order to establish themselves as a branch of the Wear's Cove Baptist church. No explanation is offered for the change, but in practice the Wear's Cove church proved to be more lenient in authorizing steps toward complete independence.[7]

The group that constituted the formal establishment of the "Cades Cove Arm of the Wear's Cove Church" on June 16, 1827, was small in number. Ten people, including Richard Davis, the pastor, and his brother William, the clerk, were the charter members. In addition to John and Lucretia Oliver, the other members were James Oliver (a brother), James Johnson and his wife Emily, Christopher Winters, Edward James, and

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[7] Ibid., November 3, 1826; W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 7.

John Lacy. John Oliver purchased the church book for $1.50, and the first meeting on June 16, 1827, was duly recorded.[8]

Complete independence came on June 19, 1829, when the "Arm of the Wear's Cove Church in Cades Cove" finally became a separate entity, the Cades Cove Baptist church. A presbytery "called for came forward for the purpose of constituting a church in Cades Cove, viz., Brother Thomas Hill and Brother Augustine Bowers, and after the necessary examination they on the 20th instance pronounced them a Church." The presbytery from the Wear's Cove church evidently felt it was necessary to subject the Cades Cove members to the most rigorous examination before they finally conceded their orthodoxy.[9]

Although small in membership throughout the century, this oldest established church in Cades Cove continued to dominate the social and cultural mores of the community and, in a very real sense, to determine the fabric of the developing community. Other churches will be discussed later, but the internal life of the Baptist church is illuminating for many reasons. The important battles were all theological disputes, with the possible exception of the debate over the Civil War. A careful examination of these theological disputes, however, will answer basic questions about the source of their religious socialization, to what

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[8]Cades Cove Baptist Church Book, 1827-1905, in possession of Ray Taylor, Maryville, Tennessee. The church changed its name to Primitive Baptist in 1841. Hereafter cited Primitive Baptist Minutes.

[9]Ibid., June 19, 1829.

extent it was only isolated localism, or whether it reflected regional and national patterns.[10]

The Cades Cove church in 1829 was still very much in the mainstream of Baptist theology in Tennessee and the larger region. Essentially Calvinistic, they shared with other Baptists an abhorence of infant baptism, and an insistence on complete separation of church and state. The basic tenets of their theology had long been established; they would have felt completely at home with the London Confession of Faith of 1644 or its American restatement in 1742 as the Philadelphia Confession of Faith which affirmed the Baptists' belief in the doctrine of particular election and the baptism by immersion of believers only.[11]

To recapitulate in minute detail the doctrines or theology of the Cades Cove church would be repetitious, since these beliefs have been carefully enumerated by other scholars.[12] There are certain basic ideas, however, which early shaped the development of the cove church and later determined its response to new movements within the church. These ideas

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[10] Ibid., passim; W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 7-8, 52-144.

[11] W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 7-8, 60-61, 107-108; Lawrence Edwards, History of the Baptists of Tennessee with Particular Attention to the Primitive Baptists of East Tennessee (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1941), 4. See also J. B. Moody, The Distinguishing Doctrines of Baptists (Nashville, 1901), 85-140.

[12] The best analysis of Baptists in East Tennessee is Edwards, Primitive Baptists, 15-106, which makes the most complete use of unpublished church and association minutes, often overlooked by other scholars. Other standard monographs include B. F. Riley, Baptists of the South in States East of the Mississippi (Philadelphia, 1898); S. W. Tindell, The Baptists of Tennessee (2 vols., Kingsport, Tennessee, 1930); Walter Brownlow Posey, Religious Strife on the Southern Frontier (Baton Rouge, 1965), and O. W. Taylor, Early Tennessee Baptists, 1768-1832 (Nashville, 1957).

were succinctly outlined by W. H. Oliver, pastor of the church from 1882 until his death in 1940:

> It is well known that Primitive Baptist believe the doctrine of Church succession that the church first organized by Christ has existed in all ages of the world to the present, and we claim to be in that succession, the oldest Baptist church in America was planted by Dr. John Clark before Roger Williams was baptized. . . . The new testament contains all that entered into the faith and practice of the apostelic churches. It is the only revealed record of Christian truth. It covers all they had. The church of the first century forms the standard and example for the church of all future ages. We Baptist claim that from the time of its organization on earth, it has stood distinct and visible untill the present time. . . . We believe that Jesus Christ himself instituted the Church, that it was perfect at the start, suitably adopted in its organization to every age of the world, to every locality of earth, to every state and condition of the world, to every state and condition of mankind, without any changes or alterations to suite the times, customs, situations, or localities. The old church of God has never tolerated any innovations of men.[13]

From this quotation it is evident that these Baptists believed their doctrines represented a revealed truth which was fixed for all time. Such an attitude logically made the church conservative, because any later innovation would in this frame of reference be contrary to their basic doctrine of revealed truth. Yet it was to be admitted that men in their fallible state might occasionally mistake or misinterpret the truth.

In such circumstances, the only reliable guide was the Bible, the revealed word of God, and for this reason, they insisted on literally following the scriptures and ordering their church policy as closely as possible to scriptural injunctions. The phrase, "thus saith the Lord"

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[13]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 107-108.

was a powerful expression among them, and they were prone to try everything by the scriptures. It logically followed that any institution or practice which was not specifically mentioned in the scriptures was an erroneous, temporal improvisation of man. Such innovations they were bound by the nature of their theology to denounce under the common opprobrium of "institutions of the day."[14]

Maintaining their doctrinal purity according to the scriptures was too great a task for any one individual. In the Cades Cove church, the functional unit organized for this purpose consisted of all the church members who obtained their standing through the long and difficult process of the conversion experience. Baptist churches are often termed democratic, but that concept has only limited application to the real mechanism of control, which was the group. Operating within a consensus mechanism, each new idea presented to the church had to be approved by the majority of the church members, that small number which constituted the visible saints.[15]

It is probably within this church consensus that the sense of community for the larger area of Cades Cove developed. The majority of church members had absolute control over all functions of the church; their pastor maintained his position not by appeals to new ideas or doctrines, but by seeming to confirm the old truths of what they already

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[14] Ibid., 8.

[15] Ibid., 11-17. Evidence of this consensus mechanism occurs repeatedly throughout the century; every decision was voted on by the congregation, which reserved the right to reverse its former decisions at any time. Primitive Baptist Minutes, passim.

believed. The Cades Cove church was characteristic of other Baptist churches of their generation, inasmuch as they had a very acute knowledge of Baptist history and an awareness of their own role in its unfolding process. This awareness explains in part their intense sense of accountability, and their insistence that extraordinary caution be taken in preserving the church book, their written record of the church's earthly transactions.[16]

The local group knew, for instance, that much if not most of their former troubles and persecutions stemmed from efforts on the part of outside ecclesiastical or civil authorities to dominate or destroy their local autonomy. Even in the new world, Baptists had undergone bitter persecutions, particularly from the established Anglican Church in Virginia before the Revolution. This consciousness of past persecutions added a touch of paranoia to the church group in Cades Cove which lasted throughout the century. It made them more determined than ever to avoid any vestige of ecclesiastical form or hierarchal structure which threatened to wrestle control of their church from the local congregation.[17]

Under these circumstances, the role of their pastor quite naturally was severely limited and circumscribed. After the Revolutionary War, the fear developed in Virginia and other Southern states that an educated ministry would be conducive to building up a strong and aggressive ecclesiastical hierarchy. "When once our ministry becomes

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[16] W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 7-8; Primitive Baptist Minutes, passim.

[17] Ibid.

educated," Virginia Baptists argued, "we will become an ecclesiasticism like our persecutors, and lose the simplicity vouchsafed to the churches of Jesus Christ." No lesser a personage than Patrick Henry had argued against any hierarchy or delegation of powers which would remove control from the local church. "Down with anything," Henry argued and Baptists everywhere agreed, "which would tend to make us like our persecutors."[18]

According to this line of thought, paid or salaried preachers were an anathema to the early Baptists, because a salary represented both a tendency toward an ecclesiastical structure contrary to the early church practices and an unhealthy independence on the part of the pastor. Their preachers were "raised up" from among the congregation. A person thus compelled to preach was allowed to exercise his "gifts"; if the entire congregation approved these "gifts," he was then subjected to a rigid examination by a presbytery of other ministers which led ultimately to ordination.[19]

Ordination in itself was no guarantee that a preacher would continue in this role indefinitely. If he veered from the path of orthodoxy, or seemed weak and ineffectual as a preacher, the congregation could vote

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[18]J. H. Grime, History of Middle Tennessee Baptists (Nashville, 1902), 548. Henry's efforts to promote toleration for the persecuted Baptists are succinctly outlined in Robert Douthat Meade, Patrick Henry: Patriot in the Making (Philadelphia, 1957), 245-62. See also William Wert Henry, Patrick Henry, Life, Correspondence and Speeches (3 vols., New York, 1891), I, 117-19, II, 202-5. For a revisionist interpretation of Henry's changing role in Virginia's struggle for religious toleration, see Richard R. Beeman, Patrick Henry: A Biography (New York, 1974), 95, 111-20.

[19]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 72-75; Primitive Baptist Minutes, passim; Edwards, Primitive Baptists, 8.

to deny the right to continue exercising his "gift" in the pulpit. The essential point throughout the entire process whereby an individual became minister is that at no point did his status escape absolute control by the congregation. His continuance depended on a consensus of approval by the majority; if this approval ended, or was compromised, his usefulness among them was at an end.[20]

Although a minister was not paid a regular salary, church members felt constrained from time to time to contribute various articles to his support. But none of the ministers in the Cades Cove church throughout the century were able to manage without an outside occupation. In this regard, the life of the minister was particularly difficult. In addition to his regular church duties, which were never few or easy, he was obliged to work during the week. His behavior and performance were under the constant critical scrutiny of his entire congregation which placed little value on individual privacy. One of the cove ministers, William Brickey, succinctly stated the problem in the 1894 association minutes:

> What shall the minister do? If he does not support his family the church does not want to hear him preach, if he neglect the churches they will suffer for the preaching of the word, if he neglect his family they will suffer for a temporal support, so the minister finds himself between two scorching fires. 'Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel!' 'Woe is unto me if I provide not for my own family!' What shall the ministers do? What shall the churches do? Let the ministers do and preach as the Lord has commanded them; and let the churches support them as the Lord has ordained they should. Then, no doubt, the Lord will bless both ministers

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[20] Primitive Baptist Minutes, passim; Edwards, Primitive Baptists, 8.

> and churches in the faithful discharge of their duties toward each other.[21]

Given the difficulty of their position, it is surprising that the tenure of the Cades Cove Baptist church's ministers lasted as long as it did. Richard Davis, chosen as the first pastor for the church at its initial meeting on June 16, 1827, had been a very active preacher in the Wear's Cove, Tuckaleechee Cove, and Miller's Cove Baptist churches from the first decade of the nineteenth century. He and his brother William, who served as clerk, removed to Walker County, Georgia, in 1839 in the general migration to the newly opened lands of the Cherokee Nation.[22]

Other ministers in the Tennessee Association assisted the Cades Cove church in its early years but were never actually pastors there. The significance of their names lies in the fact that not one of these eleven men left the older church when the break among Baptists over missions occurred in 1838. The Cades Cove church was thus influenced in its formative years by the most orthodox clergymen in the old Tennessee Association, and this influence would determine to a large extent the conservative course of the church throughout the century.[23]

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[21]Minutes of the Ninety-Third Anniversary of the Tennessee Association of Primitive Baptist (1894), 9. Hereafter cited Primitive Baptist Association Minutes with appropriate year.

[22]Primitive Baptist Minutes, 1827-1832, passim; Burns, "Settlement and Early History," 60.

[23]These ministers were Thomas Hill, Richard Wood, George Snider, Dukes Kimbrough, James Taylor, William Billue, Joseph Lambert, Noah Haggard, Billy Hollaway, Augustine Bowers, and Elijah Rogers. Primitive Baptist Minutes, 1827-1835, passim; Burns, Blount County, 118-24. Brief biographies of these ministers is given in Miller's Cove Primitive Baptist Church: Committee's Report on Origin and History, written November 18, 1951, by John W. Oliver, John Ogle, and Hoyle Taylor. A

After an interim during which visiting preachers officiated, Johnson Adams became pastor in 1833, continuing in this capacity until he was removed from office August 16, 1845, for joining the Missionary Baptist church. Rumblings against Adams appeared as early as October 21, 1937, when he was accused of "deviating from the draft of doctrine he used to preach." The following day, Adams temporarily assuaged criticism by submitting a "summary of the principles of doctrine" which he adhered to in his preaching. Further deviations, however, led to his final dismissal, a step which the church appeared reluctantly and painfully forced to take.[24]

Various members of the church acted as moderator, or pastor, from 1845 until the Civil War, including John Chambers and John Oliver, both of whom were deacons. Ace Delosur and Humphrey Mount from Stock Creek Primitive Baptist church were the moderators most frequently called during this period. Absalom Abbott was ordained minister May 17, 1856. After the war, Jackson B. J. Brickey was chosen pastor of the church on October 28, 1871, and continued in this capacity throughout the remainder of the century. Remembered by the church as the most able minister of the nineteenth century, he proved to be an excellent debator when defending his denomination's beliefs against the doctrines of other

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copy is in the author's possession and is hereafter cited Report on Miller's Cove Primitive Baptist Church.

[24]Primitive Baptist Minutes, 1833-1845, passim.

churches. W. H. Oliver was ordained minister on August 27, 1882, and served in this capacity until his death in 1940.[25]

The size of Oliver's presbytery—six men—underlined the growing trend in the years after 1870 toward a collective ministery, although this practice is nowhere explicitly stated. Ordained ministers had always been exchanged by churches within the association, and after 1880, the Cades Cove church had many preachers who officiated either at the home church or elsewhere. Elders William and Jackson B. J. Brickey, William H. Oliver, W. A. Gregory, John and James Abbott, Giles P. Dunn, John H. Brickey, and G. P. Adams served the Tennessee Association of Primitive Baptist during the last two decades of the century.[26]

Many church members aspired to preach but were unacceptable to the congregation. The old church book contains numerous examples of men who were "liberated to exercise their gifts in public," but who failed eventually to be ordained. Occasionally the church limited the area of this type of practice preaching to either the home church or a few neighboring churches. At any rate, the congregation kept close control over its ministers in each stage of their development. The trend toward a collective ministry at the end of the century was perhaps another unofficial measure to assure orthodoxy, since the rivalry which ensued

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[25]Oliver's presbytery included Jackson B. J. Brickey, William Brickey, Giles Dunn, Levi Adams, Absalom A. Abbott and David McDaniel. Primitive Baptist Minutes, 1845-1882, passim; W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 73-75.

[26]Primitive Baptist Minutes, 1880-1900, passim; Burns, Blount County, 123.

among the ministers gave the congregation even greater power over the selection and continuance of their pastor. Even these preachers were only a small percentage of the total number of men who aspired to the ministry but were never approved by the congregation.[27] Power was given grudgingly, and a minister, even after achieving his position as one of the chosen few, could at any point be removed from the pulpit.

Although the pastor nominally held the most important position in the church organization, in reality the role of the church clerk was far more significant. The clerk was elected to his position, as was the pastor, by the entire congregation, but usually held his position for much longer periods of time. The clerk was entrusted with all the church correspondence—letters of dismission, requests for pastoral assistance, and communications regarding association meetings. Although ostensibly acting only to carry out the wishes of the congregation, most clerks in the Cades Cove church managed to place the stamp (however unconsciously) of their own personalities and viewpoints on this correspondence.[28]

By far his most important function was keeping the church book current. Every month a business meeting was conducted in which the

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[27]Primitive Baptist Minutes, passim.

[28]Ibid. Miscellaneous church letters dating from 1834 throughout the century in author's possession. Many Cades Cove church letters are found in the manuscript collections of other area churches. An excellent example is a letter found among the Stock Creek Baptist church records which reads as follows: "We the Primitive Baptist church of Christ in Cades Cove now in session sendeth greeting to her beloved sister Stock Creek Church our Sister in the Lord we wish you to send us our beloved Brother Ace Delosur to take the pastoral care of our church done in Church Conference the third Saturday of October 1854 Peter Cable Clerk." Copy in author's possession.

pastor served as moderator and the clerk recorded all official business in this book—new members, exclusions, and occasionally a restatement of the church doctrine or articles of faith. Extraordinary significance was attached to this record. Only the most orthodox and faithful member could be entrusted with such a responsibility.[29]

There is a remarkable sense of historicity in the Primitive Baptist church book which makes it the single most important contemporary manuscript source for the nineteenth century. The various clerks seemed well aware of their relative position in the course of Baptist history, and the church book reflects this intense sense of accountability. Great pains were taken carefully to explain and justify every action of the church. In any dispute within the church, both sides immediately sought possession of this record, since it alone gave legitimacy.[30] Although they would have rejected the theological implications involved in any comparison, the church book in reality functioned as their ark of the covenant.

There were only three regularly appointed clerks during the nineteenth century. William Davis, brother of Richard, served as the first clerk from the organization of the church in 1827 until he removed to Walker County, Georgia, in 1839. During the next four years, various members acted as clerk pro tempore. On September 15, 1838, Peter Cable was appointed clerk and served until his death on January 27, 1866.

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[29]Primitive Baptist Minutes, passim.

[30]Ibid.

Elijah Oliver, son of John and Lucretia, was appointed clerk on August 19, 1867, and served for thirty-seven years until his death on February 22, 1905.[31]

Meeting only once a month, usually on the fourth Saturday and following Sunday, the congregation collectively assumed responsibility for church discipline. The causes of expulsion from the church are numerous and reflect the heavy emphasis placed on pietistic living. Members might be excluded for nonattendance at the regular monthly meetings, for joining another denomination, or for failing to observe some form of the church rules or decorum. The church book was always explicit about the excommunicant's particular failure. Elizabeth Slaughter was charged with adultery and excluded on April 19, 1834; Butler Tipton was excluded on March 21, 1884, for "betting and shooting"; Rachel McCauley was excluded the same day for failure to be baptised.[32]

These exclusions, and many others too numerous to cite, reveal a careful scrutiny kept on the community by the entire congregation. In the Baptist church every member assumed these duties and did not rely on church officials to keep an eye on the flock, as did the Methodists. However, there were certain procedural guarantees against being falsely accused. Any member of the church might bring a particular charge against another member, or charges might be introduced against a member whose offense was exposed through "public clamor."[33]

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[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

The church then, according to scriptural injunctions, voted to send an elder or deacon to confront the offending member and request him to answer the charges before the entire congregation. The accused could either deny the charges (which was rarely successful), or acknowledge his fault and ask the church's forgiveness. While the congregation invariably voted to exclude anyone who ignored such notification, they were always indulgent in forgiving a repentant sinner who thus "made his acknowledgments." The most common venial sin was drinking; the Baptist remained strongly opposed to alcoholic consumption throughout the century.[34]

The total number of active members was never large in the Primitive Baptist church, although membership greatly increased in proportion to the total population after the Civil War and was always far greater than that of any other denomination in the cove. In 1881, for instance, there were fifty-two members out of a total population of 449.[35] (See Table 4.) These membership figures are meaningless, however, since they

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[34] Ibid. "There are gross crimes which a single member commits against the whole church, such as outlaw violating crimes, swearing, public drunkness, stealing, robbing, murder, and such like, this is not individual violation, as the other, but this outlaw, open transgression affects the whole cause of Christ and Christianity. This calls for immediate action of the church. The violator is to be notified to come before the whole body and publicly make confession of his or her faults, and in this way to take off the disgrace he or she has brought on the cause of the whole church and if he refused to do this the church is to exclude him or her from their fellowship to save the body. Amputation is necessary. Whereupon if he repents and confesses his sins, and acknowledges that the church done right, he may be received back into fellowship again." W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 145-46.

[35] Primitive Baptist Association Minutes (1881), 1; Blount County Census, Population, 1880.

TABLE 4

MEMBERSHIP IN THE CADES COVE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, 1870-1900

Year	Number of Members
1879	50
1881	52
1884	100
1890	91
1892	82
1893	83
1894	92
1895	85
1896	82
1898	94
1899	94
1900	105

Source: Compiled from The Tennessee Association of Primitive Baptist Minutes, 1879-1900.

give no real indication of either the actual size of church attendance or the influence of the church throughout the community, and it is within the context of this larger consensus mechanism that the real significance and power of the Primitive Baptists must be understood.

This larger mechanism of the church's influence within the community is extremely complex and difficult to analyze because of the many apparent contradictions. Although difficult to obtain, church membership was open to anyone, and the congregation remained intentionally classless; political power or wealth could not gain any influence over the basically proletarian group. No member of the entrepreneural class, Daniel D. Foute or Dr. Calvin Post, ever joined the Baptists; they remained uniformly Presbyterian. As has been previously discussed, the structure and theology of the Baptists kept the power of any individual, even the pastor, in close check.[36]

The church nevertheless sought through moral persuasion to control the mores and attitudes of the community. The larger community acquiesced in this control because it came essentially from a broadly-based group consensus within the church, and was not dictated by one individual, or even by the Baptist sectarian theology, but rather by the attitudes and behavior of the entire congregation. It is a well-known fact that a small, highly motivated and organized group can effectively control a

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[36]Primitive Baptist Minutes, passim; Skipper and Gove, "'Stray Thoughts,'" Part I, 129-31.

larger, disorganized group.[37] As such, the Baptists had the added advantage of appealing to religious values and associations already held by the larger community, regardless of whether they were members of the church or even attended.[38]

The net result of the church structure was that the Primitive Baptists held far more power over the community than either the Civil authorities, political parties, or prominent entrepreneurs such as Daniel D. Foute. Not that the church ever sought such political power; complete separation of church and state was one of the oldest Baptist tenets. But the potential power remained great throughout the century, and decisions about whether to use this power were made in almost complete independence from any extraneous interference. This potential political power and independence of action within the church are two key

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[37] James MacGregor Burns and Jack Walter Peltason, Government by the People: The Dynamics of American National, State, and Local Government (Fifth ed., Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1964), 291. Although it is not within the scope of this study to analyze various cove organizations within the strict confines of group dynamics, the continuing research on the function of groups within their larger political and social context offers excellent opportunities for comparison. See particularly Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin Zander, eds., Group Dynamics: Research and Theory (Second ed., Evanston, Ill., 1960), 165-319, 487-624.

[38] Perry Miller maintains that in the eighteenth century, the basic frame of reference of Protestant theology was shared in varying degrees by all Americans, regardless of geographical dispersion or sectarian preference. Perry Miller, "From the Covenant to the Revival," in James W. Smith and A. Leland Jamison, eds., Religion in American Life: The Shaping of American Religion (4 vols., Princeton, 1961), I, 322-50. Whether this generalization holds for new frontier areas in the nineteenth century is questionable, but the compact nature of society in Cades Cove made it highly improbable that most of the residents had not been exposed to some form of evangelizing at one time or another. J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 10-13.

factors in understanding how the community reacted to various crises such as the Civil War.[39]

The Baptists constructed a meeting house in 1832 which was built of logs and "was very crude in construction." Up until that time, they had met in the school house or in private homes, occasionally holding services at night. In 1836 one of the cove's early entrepreneurs, William Tipton, deeded to "John Oliver and Peter Cable agents for the Baptist Church" a tract of land including "a half acre of land the place where the Baptist meeting house now stands" for "the use of publick worship forever." The Primitive Baptist church constructed a more modern building on this site in 1887 to replace the older log structure.[40]

The great Baptist division known as the Anti-mission Split occurred in East Tennessee between the years 1825 and 1845, reaching a climax in 1837-1838. The bitterness with which the issue was debated is clearly reflected in the "tongue-lashing evidences of white-hot feeling" in the 1830-1840 issues of the Baptist, a church periodical published in Nashville. Lawrence Edwards cites three basic reasons why some Baptists reacted so vigorously against organized missionary activity by the church: the uneducated condition of the masses of Baptists, the emphasis

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[39]An excellent example of their control over the larger community is the continuing pressure by the Primitives to end distilling and sales of whiskey; they succeeded in keeping distilleries out of the cove proper throughout the century. Yet distilling continued to be a highly profitable occupation, particularly after the Civil War. Primitive Baptist Minutes, passim; Gamble, Heritage and Folk Music, 67-68; Burns, Blount County, 243.

[40]William Tipton to John Oliver and Peter Cable, October 1836, Blount Deeds, Book M, p. 178; J. W. Oliver, Notes, 7.

placed upon the hyper-Calvinistic view of the scriptures by an illiterate ministry, and the "activity of a very strange and powerful personality, Daniel Parker."[41]

The Cades Cove church is an excellent weathervane for analyzing the dispute at the local level and testing Edwards' hypotheses, because the issue there was bitterly debated and led to an angry split or division among the congregation. On September 15, 1838, the church book records a growing debate among members over missions, the Baptist church convention, Sunday schools, and temperance societies, all of which were denounced by the conservative members as being "institutions of the day" without scriptural authorization.[42]

When the dispute appeared to be continuing unabated, the (then still undivided) Tennessee Association of United Baptist sent a committee to investigate the Cades Cove church. This committee filed the following report on May 11, 1839:

> Thus met the following brethern, to-wit: Elijah Rogers, Samuel ? , Andrew Kanatcher, Eli Roberts, and Wm. Billue, five members of the committee appointed by the Association to examine into the cause of the division in the church in Cade's Cove, and we find that the church is divided on the subject of Missions—a part of the church having made joining or fellowshiping those that have joined any of the benevolent institutions of the day, a test of fellowship—and the above named committee, after using all the arguments we were master of to show the brethern that such a course was unscriptural, contrary to the advice of the Association, and common usages of the Baptist church—that it was taking away the privileges of their brethern unjustly—but they appeared unwilling to take any advice; therefore, we believe the thirteen members,

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[41]Edwards, Primitive Baptists, 56-70.

[42]Primitive Baptist Minutes, September 15, 1838.

> and those of the other party that were willing to grant liberty of conscience, and not to lord it over their brethern by making any new test of fellowship, to be the Baptist Church in Cade's Cove upon constitutional principles, and advise the church to act friendly towards the opposing party and as soon as they see their error to receive them into fellowship, and treat them with brotherly kindness.[43]

Neighboring churches were drawn into the vortex, as the following extract from the Ellejoy Baptist church records in August of 1839 shows:

> John Thomas having written a false report of the proceedings of the committee sent to Cades Cove by the Association to the editor of the Primitive Baptist—this church says he has done them injustice & appoint Wm. Johnson Jr. & James Davis to go to Cades Cove to obtain the record relative to the exclusion of the members who the committee recognized as the church & petition Johnson Adams & David Cunningham to attend at our next meeting in October to give testimony in the above case.
>
> October 4, 1839 Excluded John Thomas for falsely accusing the committee that was sent to Cades Cove to settle a difficulty.[44]

When the dust finally settled on the controversy, thirteen members, including the pastor, Johnson Adams, had been excluded. These thirteen promptly formed the Missionary Baptist church. The older church assumed the name "Primitive Baptist church" on May 15, 1841, and resumed their church business as usual. It is interesting to note in this regard that in Blount County only Tuckaleechee and Cades Cove had strong enough

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[43] Minutes of the Tennessee Association of United Baptists, Report on Cades Cove Baptist Church, May 11, 1839, in the Baptist Archives, Nashville, Tennessee. This report was made before the Cades Cove church formally separated from the old Tennessee Association in 1841 and assumed the name "Primitive." Later both groups contended that they were the legitimate heirs of the older association. See Edwards, Primitive Baptists, 72-73; Report on Miller's Cove Primitive Baptist Church, 4.

[44] Minutes of the Ellejoy Baptist Church, August to October 4, 1839, photostatic copy in the McClung Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tennessee.

groups of the Old School faction to remain active without faltering after the 1838 division.[45]

In the Cades Cove split, Edwards' explanation about an illiterate ministry and laity's causing the division begs the question, since there was relatively no difference between the literacy rate of either faction, or any real indication that one side was more progressive than the other. Many ministers and clerks of the older church had served as school teachers in the cove; they objected to any ecclesiastical training or religious instruction in the schools, but were in no way opposed to secular education. Both sides maintained a hyper-Calvinistic view of the scriptures. The Primitives saw the whole question of missions as an unwarranted innovation, and the entire structure of their theology, as previously discussed, militated against any deviation from scriptural injunctions.[46]

The real key to understanding the division, however, is not theological, but organizational. The major impetus of the church had always been to keep absolute power over their own affairs within the congregation. The entire panoply of new organizational structures, such as a mission board, or the Baptist church convention, they interpreted as a movement away from local autonomy toward a centralized ecclesiastical structure similar to their persecutors. In this interpretation, the

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[45]Primitive Baptist Minutes, May 15, 1841; Burns, Blount County, 123.

[46]Edwards, Primitive Baptists, 56-70; Primitive Baptist Minutes, passim; W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 87-94. Dr. Jobe recalled going to school during the 1820's to William Davis, first clerk of the church. Jobe, Autobiography, 15-16.

important point is that they felt their power to control their own affairs being threatened by outside forces which from their theological and historical perspective seemed counter-revolutionary. Their opponents, not the Primitives, were the reactionaries.[47]

The ultimate test of their determination to maintain control over their own congregation came with the Civil War. Inscribed on the church book is their formal explanation, or apology, for not holding church services between 1862 and 1865:

> We the Primitive Baptist Church in Blount County, Cades Cove, do show to the publick the reason why we have not kept up our church meeting. It was on account of the rebelion and we was union people and the Rebels was too strong here in Cades Cove. Our preacher was abliged to leave sometimes but thank God we once more can meet tho it was from August 1862 until June 1865 that we did not meet but when we met the Church was in peace.[48]

The reasons why the Primitive Baptist church remained defiantly Union in their political allegiance are complex. The important point here is that the congregation again asserted their independence, and determined on a course oblivious to the strong outside pressures to yield to the Southern ideology (as other Southern churches did), or at least to remain neutral. Once the consensus was reached among the congregation, however, the ideas involved were too widely dispersed throughout the fabric of the entire community to be destroyed by closing

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[47]Primitive Baptist Minutes, passim; W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 8-9. A polemic widely circulated in the cove after 1910 which expressed the theological objections of the Primitive Baptists to missions was Thomas E. Watson, Foreign Missions Exposed (Atlanta, 1910). Watson argued that missionaries were "agents of American commercialism," and represented "cultural imperialism."

[48]Primitive Baptist Minutes, June, 1865.

the church, murdering its leaders (such as Russell Gregory), or forcing them to hide out in the surrounding mountains.[49]

The question of slavery prevented some churches in the border states from joining the Confederacy, but there is no mention in the Cades Cove church book of slaves or slavery at any point during the century. There were no slaves in the cove, although some of the larger entrepreneurs, such as Daniel D. Foute, owned slaves at other locations in Blount County. The community was composed of many men, such as Robert Burchfield (who incidentally belonged to the Missionary Baptist church), who had owned slaves at their former residences in North Carolina. There is no clear answer, however, to the question of the Primitive Baptists' role as the dominant church in keeping slavery out of the cove. Neighboring communities in Blount County, particularly Tuckaleechee Cove, had numerous slave-owners.[50]

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[49] Ibid.; W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 21-38. The influence of the American sectarian church within the community is analyzed by Sidney Mead as the principle of "voluntaryism," which means "that a powerful selective factor is at work in the choice of denominational leaders, since such leaders finally gain and hold support and power in the group through persuasion and popular appeal to the constituency . . . each group has a kind of massive and stubborn stability, inertia, and momentum of its own, deeply rooted and broadly based in the voluntary consent and commitment of the individuals composing it. Here is the real basis for the tremendous vitality of these denominations. This is likely to become evident in periods of internal stress or of threat to the existence of the group from the outside. . . ." Sidney E. Mead, "Denominationalism: The Shape of Protestantism in America," Church History, XXIII (December, 1954), 300.

[50] Primitive Baptist Minutes, passim; Blount Deeds, 1830-1860, passim; Burns, Blount County, 58-59.

A more probable explanation for the church's strong pro-Union position lies in the basic ideology surrounding their concept of the church's role in society. As has been previously discussed, the Primitive Baptists conceived of the church and its doctrines as being fully enumerated in the scriptures. Any innovation, or "institution of the day," they regarded with great suspicion and hostility. This same entrenched conservatism carried over into their political attitudes. The South, from their point of view, was attempting to impose radically new interpretations on the civil order, the old United States, which they had long regarded as ideologically fixed or complete.[51]

John Oliver, a founding member of the church and one of its most influential deacons, clearly represented this line of thought. The golden age of Jacksonian egalitarianism was fixed in his mind as the optimum political settlement by his participation in the War of 1812 at Horseshoe Bend, and he could only regard the Confederate cause with abhorence after the long decades of his isolation in the cove from other Southern political mainstreams. Other members of the congregation such as Peter Cable agreed that secession was a dangerous and unjustified innovation in the political status quo.[52]

Whatever their reasons for assuming a pro-Union position, the congregation was galvanized into undergound political activity by the threat of outside force when North Carolina guerrillas closed the church. That action ended all their doubts. Church members might have been

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[51]Primitive Baptist Minutes, passim; W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 21-38.

[52]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 21-38.

willing to assume a nonactive stance in the conflict, despite their pro-Union sympathies, but direct action set off an ideological chain reaction based on their earlier political and theological socialization.[53]

Long acutely aware of their numerous persecutions as a denomination in the past, some of the congregation had grown weary during the relatively prosperous and free years of the 1840's and 1850's of being constantly warned by jeremiads of former persecutions in Virginia and of the distinct possibility, according to the scriptures, of God's chosen again being subjected to persecutions because of their faith. And now, in 1862, mirable dictu, that very set of circumstances seemed to have occurred, jarring them out of their complacency just as they had so often been forewarned![54] This apparent confirmation of what they had long believed gave them a moral unanimity to resist the invaders.

The congregation of the Primitive Baptist church thus formed its core of resistance to rebel guerrillas. To their political differences was now added the conviction that their theology was under attack. In this sense, the North Carolinians made no greater mistake than to force the cove churches to close. In so doing, they triggered an ideological response which set strong motivational forces loose in the entire community. The whirlwind they reaped in terms of organized resistance

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[53] Ibid.; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 13-15.

[54] Primitive Baptist Minutes, passim; W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 21-38.

from this wellspring of paranoia was out of all proportion to Cades Cove's usefulness to the Southern cause.[55]

Yet the war had only a temporary effect on the internal life of the church; no major doctrinal questions divided members over this conflict. They strongly resisted attempts by outside forces to disrupt their church meetings, but within the church all remained quiet. This anomaly of outer stress and inner calm was not observed by the majority of the congregation; doctrinal questions had always held the first rank in their priorities. An outward response, even armed resistance to North Carolina guerrillas, represented only a logical reaction which their theological socialization had for decades conditioned them to make. In this sense the Civil War represented a moral unanimity toward their persecutors and an inner suspension of doctrinal disputes which was seldom enjoyed in times of peace.[56]

The worst theological crisis in the nineteenth century church occurred during the 1870's over the Two-Seed doctrine. This doctrine in simplest terms was an absolute or extreme form of predestination. All people were preordained according to whether they were of good or bad seed to salvation or damnation. The Cades Cove Primitive Baptists had always been Calvinistic; if only the elect could be saved, they had earlier argued, why send missionaries to point out the need for salvation?

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[55] W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 21-38; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 13-15. Inez Burns discusses the reaction of the people in the coves of Blount County to the threat of a formal invasion. Burns, Blount County, 60.

[56] This period of comparative calm within the church extended to 1870. Primitive Baptist Minutes, 1860-1870, passim.

Yet in actual practice they had never been willing to concede the logical end or extreme limits of predestination; there was always a flicker of free-will in their sermons (though they formally denounced Arminianism).[57]

Advocates of the Two-Seed doctrine thus confronted the Cades Cove church with a new interpretation of their theology based on tenets long held by the congregation. Confusion reigned for several years; no one appeared able effectively to combat this latest innovation, which seemed such a logical explication of their old beliefs. The majority finally reacted however, and expelled all proponents of Two-Seedism. In so doing, they had taken an important theological step toward Arminianism, or free-will, quite involuntarily; attempting to prevent change in their theology, they were, in fact, compelled to make a subtle but very significant alteration in stepping back from the extreme end of Calvinistic predestination. The controversy flared up intermittently through the rest of the century, but the congregation remained adamantly opposed to Two-Seedism.[58]

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[57] Ibid., 1870-1880, passim. For a discussion of the Two-Seed doctrine among Primitive Baptists in the larger area of East Tennessee, see Edwards, Primitive Baptists, 81-89.

[58] Expulsions for adhering to the Two-Seed doctrine are numerous after 1875. Primitive Baptist Minutes, 1875-1900, passim. In rejecting this doctrine, the Cades Cove church appears to have been an exception to regional Primitive Baptists, who increasingly accepted the absolute predestinarian position. O. K. Armstrong and Marjorie M. Armstrong, The Indomitable Baptists: A Narrative of Their Role in Shaping American History (New York, 1967), 157-59. In 1914, W. H. Oliver of the Cades Cove church led a withdrawal from the old Tennessee Association of Primitive Baptist over the question of Two-Seedism, taking seven churches with him which set up a rival association. Why the Cades Cove church took such a strong position in contrast to other area churches is

A controversy of less importance erupted in the 1880's and 1890's over membership in secret orders or societies. The Cades Cove church debated the question of whether or not members of such secret societies ought to be excluded from church membership, and reached a consensus against them in conformity with most other Primitive Baptists in the larger region. Accordingly, on April 26, 1890, James Brown and Monroe Lequire were excluded for joining the Farmers' Alliance. No one else was excluded after 1890, however, and the controversy soon subsided.[59]

The Cades Cove church was the second largest in the Tennessee Association of Primitive Baptist, which dated its organization from 1802, but actually had formed a separate association in 1841 after the break over missions. Association meetings involved tallying membership lists from individual churches, numerous sermons, and affirming the articles of faith endorsed by the group. Queries on a wide variety of theological questions were received and answered, and an occasional circular letter was passed around which explained or clarified some point in doctrine. All these items were printed in the annual association minutes. The association was strictly congregational in organization;

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puzzling, since Two-Seedism appeared stronger among the more isolated churches in the South as a general rule. Edwards, Primitive Baptists, 98-99; Primitive Baptist Association Minutes (1914).

[59]Primitive Baptist Minutes, April 26, 1890. There were not enough secret orders in the cove to occasion the reaction of Primitive Baptists in more populous areas. For a discussion of the secret order controversy, see Edwards, Primitive Baptists, 90-99. The thirteenth article of faith of the Tennessee Association of Primitive Baptist stated explicitly that "we believe the Church of Jesus Christ should have no organic connection with any society or institution of man not authorized in God's Word." Primitive Baptist Association Minutes (1889), 4.

a member church could withdraw at any time, since decisions by the majority were in no way binding on the individual church. The right was reserved by the association, however, to exclude any church which deviated from doctrinal norms.[60]

Union meetings were held once a year, usually in the summer, when other association churches were invited to Cades Cove to share communion and the footwashing services. These meetings were conducted in strict austerity; no vanities in clothing or in church furnishings, which might indicate the pride and sinfulness of mankind, were permitted. The services were long; men and women were separated and sat on hard benches before a plain wooden pulpit and a crude table with a bucket of drinking water and a dipper. Unlike some other fundamentalist sects, the cove church frowned on any excessive emotional display during the sermon. In fact, a strict list of rules of decorum was drawn up to dictate the limits of acceptable behavior.[61]

In addition to their union and association meetings, the Primitives were on friendly terms with the Methodists in the cove, and frequently shared revivals with them. They never reconciled themselves to the Missionaries, however, and bitterly opposed any formal contact or

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[60]Eight churches with a total membership of 313 belonged in 1879; by 1900, thirteen churches with 787 members had joined. Primitive Baptist Association Minutes, 1879-1900, passim. Article II of the association constitution states that the association cannot "infringe on any of the internal rights of any church in the Union." Typescript copy of the constitution in author's possession.

[61]Primitive Baptist Minutes, passim. Union meetings were reciprocal; each church attended the meetings of all the others. Dates of these union meetings at various churches were printed in the association minutes. Primitive Baptist Association Minutes, 1879-1900, passim.

communication with their former brethern. Within the larger community of Cades Cove they were active in innumerable charitable enterprises; if any church member reported an instance of need in the cove, the congregation responded quickly and generously. They did so primarily on an individual basis, however; like other Baptists, they believed that social concerns and welfare should be the business of the individual conscience, not of the collective organization of the church.[62]

In contrast to the Primitive Baptists, the Missionary Baptist church remained very small and inactive through most of the century. The band of thirteen which broke away from the older church in May of 1839 was recognized by the Tennessee Association of Baptists as the legitimate church, but they did not gain widespread support within the community.[63] The number of members remained fewer than twenty until the Civil War. There were long periods in which no regular services were held during the two decades before the conflict. The church closed from October, 1862, until 1865 "on account of the awful horror of war," but there is no indication that its members were active in the conflict. From 1880

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[62]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 97-108. As one scholar states, "social issues over which Baptists were most concerned were those which had some moral or religious implication for the individual or some significance for the denomination. Baptists continued to be oriented toward the individual and his spiritual needs." Rufus B. Spain, At East in Zion: Social History of the Southern Baptists, 1865-1900 (Nashville, 1961), 213.

[63]Johnson Adams served as pastor of the group and Green Hill was chosen clerk. Robert Burchfield was clerk from 1846 to 1858; J. Y. Burchfield served from 1859 until 1862; Nathan Burchfield from 1867 to 1870; John P. Cable from 1871 until 1890, and Homer Lemon's term extended through 1900. History of the Missionary Baptist Church in Cades Cove, written in 1920 by J. W. H. Myers. Copy in author's possession. This brief sketch of the Missionary Baptists in the cove is the only extant record of their activities during the nineteenth century.

until 1889 no services were held.[64] However, 1893 seems to have been a turning point; the church in that year held a successful revival led by Thomas Sexton, and gained twenty new members, raising the total membership to forty-two. In 1894, they were finally able to construct their own meeting house on Hyatt hill; up until this time, they had used the Methodist or Primitive Baptist church.[65]

Any sort of analysis of the Missionaries is impossible because of the paucity of their records. They continued to be hostile to the dominant Primitive Baptists, but never had the size throughout most of the century to make any significant impact within the larger community. Some of their members, such as Butler Tipton, had been excluded from the Primitive Baptist church for various offenses; whether these dissidents further altered either the theology or pietistic standards of the older church is not known. In general, their church decorum and practices seem to have imitated those of the Primitives.[66]

Methodists were active in the cove at a very early date. Dr. Jobe said that he could "distinctly remember hearing Rev. George Eakin preaching in Cades Cove" when he was only six or seven years old, which would place the date between 1823 and 1824. Eakin was one of the most

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[64] Prominent preachers included John Wallace, James Russell, William Adams and Andy Greer during the 1850's. Between 1874 and 1879, J. M. Saults, William Lowe and William Boring officiated as pastors. In 1890, T. J. Caldhoun was called as pastor, and served with W. T. Campbell, G. B. Rice, W. H. Hodges, and Butler Tipton into the twentieth century. Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

prominent Methodist circuit riders in East Tennessee; an Irishman, he was described by Dr. Jobe as "eccentric," but "a good man." The Methodist system of circuit riders and camp meetings, made famous by Bishop Asbury, was probably more responsible for bringing religion to frontier areas, such as the cove, than any other institution.[67]

In spite of their initial enthusiasm at such meetings, however, the Methodists were slower than the Baptists in organizing churches. In Cades Cove, the church did not build a meeting house until 1840, when a deed was given by James F. Deaver to Henry Seebow, Richard Kirby, Charles McGlothlin, and Francis Kirby, trustees for the Methodist Episcopalian church in the cove.[68] John W. Oliver gives the following description of this Methodist meeting house:

> The house was of a very crude nature built of logs notched down at the corners covered with hand-made shingles and weighted down with eight poles. The seats were made of split puncheons and set on round wooden legs without back rests, and were used for school and church. A furnace of stone and earth was built up in the center to build a fire and the smoke went up through the roof. As there were no sawmills in those early pioneer days the buildings were at first without floors. Later puncheon floors were put in. Puncheons were split and hewed slabs.[69]

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[67]Jobe, Autobiography, 8; Posey, Methodism in the Old Southwest, 11-15. Eakin was sent to the Holston Circuit in 1811. "One of the most remarkable man in his time," he "penetrated the hills and hollows, byways and hedges even into the Smoky and Chilhowee mountains." Burns, Blount County, 111.

[68]James F. Deaver to Henry Seebow and others, September 7, 1840, Blount Deeds, Book U, p. 98.

[69]Sketches of the Methodist Church of Cades Cove, written in 1962 by John W. Oliver. In the author's possession, this sketch is the only extant record of the Methodists in the cove.

From 1840 until 1878, there are virtually no records of the Methodist Episcopal church in the cove, although services continued to be held there regularly. During these years, the Methodists were on friendly terms with the Primitive Baptists, frequently sharing their meeting house and participating in joint revivals. Names of early nineteenth century ministers have been lost; the Methodists never kept careful records of their transactions as did the Baptists. In the 1890's, prominent circuit ministers were I. P. Martin, C. A. Murphey, N. P. Swain, J. C. Bays, Bob Snyder, A. M. Hoyle, and C. T. Davis.[70] Among the most devout and notable members of the church at the end of the century was William "Uncle Billie" Feezell, who welcomed every Methodist preacher into his home, as Isaac P. Martin recalls.[71]

Martin described the Cades Cove Methodist church as an "old pine-pole house," such as "Asbury and McKendree found all over Tennessee and Kentucky during the first quarter of the nineteenth century." The Methodists constructed a new frame house in 1902 which is still standing. Nevertheless, membership remained small throughout the century. Martin said that in 1891 the "Methodists of Cade's Cove were but a handful."[72]

The division or schism of 1844 within the Methodist church was reflected in Cades Cove by the construction in 1880 of a Northern Methodist church on the south side of the cove near the center. This church was donated by Dan Lawson, one of the wealthiest men in the

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[70] Ibid., 4.

[71] Martin, Minister in the Tennessee Valley, 66.

[72] Ibid.

community after the Civil War, but according to one scholar, it "never developed beyond a family affair."[73] There is no real indication, moreover, that during the Civil War Cades Cove members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, were more or less pro-Southern than the wider community; their church remained closed, as did the others, for the duration of the war.[74]

Although the Methodists and Missionary Baptists would enjoy tremendous growth in size and influence in the twentieth century, the nineteenth belonged to the Primitive Baptists. Leadership within the community came from the Primitives during every major crisis, including the Civil War; their power rested on a voluntary consensus of opinion in Cades Cove more potent than any government—county, state, or national. If the community acquiesced in the social and behavioral standards imposed by their denomination, the Primitives in turn made religion and church membership accessible to everyone; by the very nature of the group mechanism through which the church operated, there were no elites or individuals with excessive power. More than any other group, the Primitives fiercely defended the principle of local autonomy, of the right to make decisions affecting their lives without outside pressure

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[73]Shields, "Cades Cove," 108.

[74]There is no evidence of the bitter conflict between the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Northern Methodist Episcopal church analyzed in William W. Sweet, The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War (Cincinnati, 1912), 96-110. See also Ledford, Methodism in Tennessee, 103-118; Horace Eugene Orr, The Tennessee Churches and Slavery (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1924), 124-52.

or influence. They also formed, in their broader concern for the welfare of the entire cove, the largest single thread in the all-important fabric of community.

CHAPTER V

THE CIVIL WAR

The Civil War was a major watershed in the cove's history, if judged solely from the enormous economic devastation apparent in the postwar agricultural census returns. Such statistical comparisons of the cove before and after the conflict, however, reveal a static and very incomplete picture of the four years which sharply changed the character of the cove people and their community. These changes can be fully comprehended only by examining the daily life of the average cove resident during the war. For him, loyalty to the Union meant years of excruciating hardships: devastation of his land and property, frequent starvation, and constant fear that he or his family might be murdered by rebel guerrillas. This chapter focuses on the trials of the individual cove farmer; for him the war experience was an intensely personal ordeal.

Another important theme is the testing of the fabric of community. Because of the divisive nature of the political conflict, all formal institutions were severely strained during the war. In the final analysis, an older sense of community reasserted itself, and the cove people acted collectively to defend themselves from the onslaught of guerrilla raids as they had earlier helped one another clear the wilderness. Because the new consensus which emerged from wartime experiences reflected attitudes and values quite different from those of the pre-1860 community, the transfer of responsibilities from traditional

leaders like Daniel D. Foute to new leaders such as Russell Gregory assumed special significance.

Cades Cove's decision to remain loyal to the Union can only be comprehended within the broader context of conflicting regional patterns. Geography alone does not explain the community's Unionism, although it is true that the mountainous environs of the cove were not suited to the growth of cotton or any other staple crop associated with the slave economy of the lower South. Yet other mountainous areas in the South not bound to the cotton culture supported the Confederacy. Western North Carolina, an area contiguous to Cades Cove and similar in terrain, vigorously supported the rebel cause with contributions of both men and material. "In the greater portion of that section of the state extending from the eastern foot-hills of the Blue Ridge to the western boundaries of Clay and Cherokee," John Preston Arthur maintains, "the slave-owners in 1861 were so rare that the institution of slavery may be said, practically, to have no existence; and yet that region sent more than fifteen thousand fighting men—volunteers—into the field."[1]

Politically and ideologically, however, there were quite different crosscurrents in East Tennessee, particularly in Blount County. There cove farmers had been constantly exposed to the exhortations of numerous abolitionists, who in the decades before 1860 had made Maryville, county seat of Blount, "a veritable fortress in the crusade against slavery." A local branch of the Manumission Society of Tennessee was active in

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[1]Arthur, Western North Carolina, 636.

Blount County as early as 1815.[2] Before 1820, New Providence Church in Maryville had freed, educated, and ordained to the ministry two blacks, one of whom, the Reverend George M. Erskine, was later sent as a Presbyterian missionary to Liberia. The large Quaker element in the county also fervently opposed slavery, and despite their conscientious opposition to war, many Blount Friends later demonstrated their deep convictions against the institution by fighting with the Union army. The Quakers were very active in promoting abolitionist literature throughout the area and in sending frequent antislavery memorials to the state legislature.

During the 1830's, East Tennessee abolitionists openly agitated to establish a separate state out of their section in order to abolish slavery there. One such noted abolitionist, Ezekiel Birdseye, reported visiting in 1841 in Maryville with fellow abolitionists Robert Bagle and "Rev. Mr. Craig, a professor in the Maryville College." They informed Birdseye that "a meeting appointed at one of the churches to discuss the subject of abolition" was "well attended," and that no "disorder or disturbance took place." He found strong support among other Blount

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[2]Asa Earl Martin, "The Anti-Slavery Societies of Tennessee," Tennessee Historical Magazine, I (December, 1915), 264.

[3]Hamer, Tennessee, I, 469; Burns, Blount County, 39, 58-59, 161. James Jones, a Blount Quaker, was president of the Manumission Society of Tennessee for many years and expressed his views frequently in Benjamin Lundy's Genius of Universal Emancipation. Martin, "Anti-Slavery Societies," 271-73.

countians for future meetings and concluded that prospects there for the abolitionist cause "are very encouraging."[4]

Maryville College, founded in 1819 as the Southern and Western Theological Seminary by the Reverend Isaac Anderson, had long been a stronghold of abolitionism. Anderson nourished among his students the ideals of freedom, equality, and education for both blacks and Indians. One scholar there wrote in 1838 that "we take the liberty to uphold and defend our sentiments, whether it is agreable or not to the slaveholder." He also mentioned "friends in the country around, among whom we have the privilege of distributing without fear a considerable number of pamphlets." Of the thirty students in the seminary preparing for the ministry, he concluded, twelve were abolitionists.[5]

Through his students at Maryville College, Dr. Anderson made a great ideological impact on other areas of East Tennessee. Some writers credit the section's decision to remain in the Union to his teachings and moral leadership.[6] At any rate, he preached the abolitionist doctrine

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[4]W. Freeman Galpin, ed., "Letters of an East Tennessee Abolitionist," ETHS Publications, No. 3 (1931), 146.

[5]Emancipator, March 16, 1838, p. 178. Another Maryville abolitionist, R. G. Williams, stated in a letter to the Emancipator, February 24, 1838, that "notwithstanding the strict laws of Tennessee, we meet through the country and discuss the merits of abolition and colonization; the former is ably defended by Rev. T. S. Kendall, pastor of the Seceder Church in this county, and several others." In 1833, William Goodell began to publish in New York the Emancipator, which the following year became the American Anti-Slavery Society's official publication. Gerald Sorin, The New York Abolitionists: A Case Study of Political Radicalism (Westport, Connecticut, 1971), 59.

[6]"Dr. Isaac Anderson had more to do with fixing the stand taken than had any other person. He was teaching the young men who went out into the country as leaders, and through his teachings, the doctrines of

at camp meetings throughout the region, including numerous sermons in Cades Cove, where he had mining and mineral interests. He was also a close friend of Dr. Calvin Post, the New York physician who had moved to the Cove in 1846. Both men shared a commitment to abolitionism and were indirectly related, since Anderson's only son had married the sister of Dr. Post's wife.[7]

If the cove people were not fully exposed to abolition propaganda in Maryville, where they attended court, paid their taxes, and sold their crops, they certainly were familiar with Dr. Post's convictions. Serving as the cove's only physician, this outspoken man found the time to write numerous antislavery tracts to government officials and to many Northern newspapers. Although no documentary proof exists to substantiate the claim, tradition holds that Dr. Post made Cades Cove a station of the "underground railroad" aiding runaway slaves escaping to the North.[8]

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loyalty to the Union and the old flag, and opposition to slavery were absorbed into their natures, and, through their influence, were reproduced in others until they permeated all the citizenship of East Tennessee." Will A. McTeer, History of New Providence Presbyterian Church, Maryville, Tennessee, 1786-1921 (Maryville, 1921), 43-44.

[7]Robinson, Memoir, 124, 174-75; unpublished Family History compiled and written by Jessie Eugenia Turner, a granddaughter of Dr. Post, Chattanooga, Tennessee.

[8]Dr. Post's many reports, correspondence, and notebooks in possession of Miss Jonnie Post, Maryville, Tennessee, hereafter cited Post Papers. Among his correspondence are several abolitionist tracts which were allegedly sent to the New York Evening Post. Examination of the Evening Post between 1850 and 1860 was inconclusive, since the authorship of such contributions is frequently not given. Under the editorship of William Cullen Bryant and William Leggett, the Post took an uncompromising stand against slavery and offered a sympathetic forum to abolitionist writers throughout this period. Allan Nevins, The Evening Post: A Century of Journalism (New York, 1922), 145-48.

The cove's geographic position and the fact that an underground railroad later operated in the community during the Civil War to aid Union soldiers escaping Southern prison camps lends logic, if not corroboration, to these assertions. From the tone of his correspondence, moreover, it seems unlikely that Dr. Post would have shrunk from the task, or that he would have hesitated to enlist his neighbors' aid in helping fugitive slaves.

Some indication of the effect of this abolitionist activity on Cades Cove lies in the fact that there is no record of any slaves ever living in the community. Men like Robert Burchfield who moved to the cove from other areas of the South sold their slaves before arrival. Daniel D. Foute owned numerous slaves in other parts of the county, but never brought any to "Paradise Lost," his home in the cove.[9] The absence of slaves from the cove was in marked contrast to surrounding areas, such as Tuckaleechee Cove, which contained numerous slaveowners. Other indications of the community's attitude toward slavery is found in the 1850 census, which lists a family of free blacks living there: Cooper and Ellen Clark, and their four children. No family could have survived

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[9]Blount Deeds, 1830-1860, passim, show frequent traffic in the slave trade by Foute, none of which occurred in Cades Cove. Robert Burchfield sold his slaves when he left Yancey County, North Carolina, to move to the cove in 1834. J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 4-6, citing Burchfield's bill of sale for his household effects. There is no record of slaves in the cove in the 1830 to 1860 census. Finally, an extensive examination of the cove deeds and land transactions between 1820 to 1860 gives no evidence of slaves' being bought or sold, in contrast to frequent mention of such traffic in other areas of Blount County. Blount Deeds, 1820-1860, passim.

in such a close-knit, homogenous society without the tacit consent of the entire community.[10]

Within the context of decades of abolitionist agitation, it is not surprising that cove residents joined forces with others in the county who fervently opposed secession on the eve of the Civil War. Out of Blount County's total population of 13,270 in 1860, only 1,363 were slaves, while 196 were free Negroes.[11] Clearly, neither the economy nor the social structure of the county was closely bound to the cotton culture; in that year, Blount produced only five bales of cotton in contrast to 106,341 bushels of wheat.[12] Accordingly, in the presidential election of 1860, the county demonstrated its sympathy for the Union by casting a particularly heavy vote for John Bell, the candidate of the Constitutional Union Party. In Maryville, Bell's campaign procession, some two miles in length and "headed by a wagon bearing a large bell," was met with "such ringing and shouting" as "had not been heard since 1840."[13]

By an overwhelming vote of 1,552 to 450, Blount County voted against withdrawal from the Union in Tennessee's secession-convention referendum

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[10]Cooper, 50 years old, listed North Carolina as his place of birth; his wife, Ellen (25), listed Tennessee. The children, Elizabeth (8), Dorchus (6), Martha (2), and Danuel (8 months), were all born in Tennessee. 1850 Census, Population, Blount County.

[11]1860 Census, Population, 459-61.

[12]1860 Census, Agriculture, 133.

[13]Marguerite Bartlett Hamer, "The Presidential Campaign of 1860 in Tennessee," ETHS Publications, No. 3 (1931), 20-21; Nashville Republican Banner, August 18, 1860.

of February 9, 1861. At this time, the majority of Tennesseeans rejected secession 69,675 to 57,798. By summer, however, the tide had turned in favor of secession in Middle and West Tennessee. Yet on June 8, Blount countians again rejected secession by an even greater margin of 1,766 to 414.[14] When East Tennessee counties assembled on June 17 in Greenville, Blount County sent such outspoken Unionists as John F. Henry and the Reverend W. T. Dowell to denounce the recent referendum as "unconstitutional and illegal, and therefore not binding upon us as loyal citizens." As Blount delegates joined other dissident eastern counties in petitioning the General Assembly for permission to "form and erect a separate state," a home guard was organized and meetings were held throughout the county to demonstrate the tremendous popular opposition to disunion.[15]

Aware of the area's strategic and economic importance, the Confederate authorities denied East Tennessee's right to secede from the rest of the state, and quickly moved in forces of from five to ten thousand soldiers to keep the section under control. Unpersuaded by a

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[14]James W. Fertig, The Secession and Reconstruction of Tennessee (Chicago, 1898), 20; J. S. Hurlburt, History of the Rebellion in Bradley County, East Tennessee (Indianapolis, 1866), 33; Memphis Daily Appeal, June 20, 1861; Burns, Blount County, 59; Oliver P. Temple, East Tennessee and the Civil War (Cincinnati, 1899), 199. For the best analysis of the sectional division over secession, see Mary Emily Robertson, The Attitude of Tennesseeans Toward the Union, 1947-1861 (New York, 1961), 11-63.

[15]James W. Patton, Unionism and Reconstruction in Tennessee, 1860-1869 (Chapel Hill, 1934), 11; Stanley F. Horn, ed., Tennessee's War, 1861-1865 (Nashville, 1965), 18. Both Secessionists and Unionists conducted vigorous rallies in Blount County; Horace Maynard spoke for two and a half hours at Ellejoy in May, 1861, to a crowd of six or seven hundred. Burns, Blount County, 59. "The right spirit prevailed there," reported the Knoxville Whig, May 25, 1861, "and curses loud and bitter were heaped upon the unconstitutional and corrupt acts of the legislature." Temple, East Tennessee, 186, 191.

massive rebel propaganda campaign which followed, Unionists adopted a program of obstructing the Confederate war effort and appealed directly to President Lincoln for military aid. "East Tennessee was now ablaze with excitement on account of the uprising and open rebellion of the Union men," who, according to one contemporary observer, "were flying to arms in squads of from fifty to five hundred."[16] Infuriated by an abortive effort to burn key bridges in the region, Confederates finally dropped their conciliatory approach and instituted a series of harsh repressive measures to control the local population and to prevent loyalists from escaping to join the Union army.[17]

Despite President Lincoln's personal sympathy for the region, not until September, 1863, when General Ambrose E. Burnside occupied Knoxville, were federal forces again in control of East Tennessee. In the meantime, both sides used the mountainous region for bitter guerrilla warfare; "as a general thing," complained Confederate Secretary of War Judah P. Benjamin in 1861, "these bands of traitors would disband and flee to the mountains on the approach of an armed force of Confederates,

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[16] Burns, Blount County, 59-60; Temple, East Tennessee, 388-411; Beatrice L. Garrett, Confederate Government and the Unionists of East Tennessee (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1932), 52-64; Horn, Tennessee's War, 33. Thomas A. R. Nelson, a prominent Union speaker, was met in "strongly Unionist Blount County" two miles out of Maryville "by an escort of perhaps three hundred horsemen." Thomas B. Alexander, Thomas A. R. Nelson of East Tennessee (Nashville, 1956), 78.

[17] Frank P. Smith, Military History of East Tennessee, 1861-1865 (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1936), 8-41; Garrett, Confederate Government, 34-81.

therefore it was a difficult matter to do anything with them."[18] Later, rebel guerrillas used these same mountain strongholds to attack federal forces. Even when Sherman came as far as Maryville to relieve Burnside on December 4, 1863, the surrounding areas such as Cades Cove were still disputed ground. Thus, regardless of which side was in control, the protracted guerrilla warfare continued unabated throughout the war, bringing havoc and desolation to the civilian population in this bloody no man's land.[19]

Confederate authorities justified the atrocities unleashed on the civilian population of East Tennessee "on the ground that these Union people were traitors, and contended that the sufferings which they were inflicting upon them were not cruelties, but righteous and well deserved punishments for their crimes as tories, traitors, and rebels against their own lawful government." Following this reasoning, the rebels, according to one contemporary observer, argued that

> Union citizens had forfeited all claim to their homes, that their possessions were no longer theirs, and therefore, that Confederates were justified in robbing Union families, plundering their farms, hunting them through the country like so many wild beasts, and shooting them upon the run like so many robbers and outlaws.[20]

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[18]Jesse Burt, "East Tennessee, Lincoln, and Sherman," ETHS Publications, No. 34 (1962), 3-25; Harold S. Fink, "The East Tennessee Campaign and the Battle of Knoxville in 1863," ETHS Publications, No. 29 (1957), 79-117; James B. Campbell, "East Tennessee During the Federal Occupation, 1863-1865," ETHS Publications, No. 19 (1947), 64-80; Horn, Tennessee's War, 34.

[19]Burns, Blount County, 62; Thomas W. Humes, The Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee (Knoxville, 1888), 138-249.

[20]Hurlburt, Rebellion in Bradley County, 29.

Although Cades Cove suffered more devastation from such guerrilla warfare than any other section of Blount County, the majority of its citizens remained loyal to the Union throughout the war.[21] Abolitionism, geography, and regional political patterns offer some explanation of the community's loyalism. The conservative theology of the Primitive Baptist Church, which opposed changes in the religious status quo, transferred into attitudes of hostility toward any innovation in the existing political order. John Oliver, the first permanent white settler, had fought under Jackson at Horseshoe Bend, and nothing had occurred in the succeeding years to dim his memory of Jacksonian egalitarianism or to lessen his commitment to the old Republic. As a respected patriarch by 1860, he was not unheeded by the community in his outspoken opposition to disunion.[22]

Yet some of the younger men in the cove chose to join the rebels. In the majority of these defections, relatives living in North Carolina or other parts of the South probably played a major role. Both the Olivers and Gregorys, for instance, had numerous relatives living in Yancey County, North Carolina, whom the younger cove men frequently visited. Such relatives in other parts of the South staunchly supported secession and the Southern cause, but did not break off correspondence

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[21] Burns, Blount County, 65.

[22] See Chapter IV for an analysis of the overlapping of religious and political attitudes during the Civil War. Oliver had also benefited materially from his service in the War of 1812; he received 80 acres of bounty land on Warrant No. 31577, March 10, 1851, and an additional 80 acres on Warrant No. 46352, December 5, 1857. Photostatic copies of these grants from the General Land Office, Department of the Interior, in author's possession.

with the cove loyalists. An excellent example of this continuity of family ties during the war is found in an extant letter from Mary Bird, Catoosa County, Georgia, to her cousin Jake in the cove. After making inquiry about all their pro-Union kin there, she concluded that "the Yankees may outnumber us and they may kill all our soldiers but never will get the Southern states."[23] Obviously some of this exuberant rebel spirit infected visiting relatives from the cove, and partially explains why a minority of the younger men from Union families joined the Confederates.

The first blow to the community occurred early in the war, when many of the younger men left to volunteer in the Union army. Brothers tended to join together, and loyalties followed family patterns of allegiance as a general rule. There were agonizing exceptions; some sons of staunchly Union families, such as Charles Gregory and William Oliver, joined the Confederate army. The two squires, Daniel D. Foute and Curran Lemons, were Confederate sympathizers, and both their sons, Bose Foute and Lee Lemons, joined the Southern army. With the exception of Dr. Post, men such as the squires who had comparative wealth and some exposure to the outside world became Confederates; the mass of cove farmers of the middle or yeoman class remained loyal to the Union. The Oliver records list twenty-one Union soldiers from the cove, and twelve

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[23]Mary Bird, Catoosa County, Georgia, to Jacob Bird, Cades Cove, August 23, 1863, in author's possession. The relationship of the Tennessee and Georgia Birds is given in Edwards and Frizzell, The "Connection," 142-48.

joined the Confederates.[24] The majority of cove men, however, were unable to join Union forces and either hid out in the mountains or joined together in small bands to fight the rebels. At any rate, by 1862 the community was depleted of most of its able-bodied men.

The absence of these men caused the collapse of the militia—the traditional defense force on which cove people had relied for protection since the earliest days of settlement. Organization of the county into militia companies for the purpose of taxation, elections, and local defense predated the establishment of civil districts in 1836. Every able-bodied man between the ages of 21 and 50 belonged to the militia, which as early as the 1820's was meeting for muster and drill on the south side of the cove. Last used to round up the remaining Cherokees in 1837-1838, the militia muster had evolved into a semi-holiday in the cove by 1860, with various shooting matches and other contests.[25] But it remained the only real form of collective defense for the community against outside attack. That defense had evaporated during the first year of the war, precisely at the time it was most needed.

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[24]Of the twenty-one Union volunteers, five sickened and died in the army; one, George W. Shields, was wounded by a cannon ball. The twelve Confederate volunteers survived the conflict although one of them, Theadore Pearson, was killed by ambush after the close of the war. J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 26-27. The class division in the cove follows closely patterns of allegiance in the larger area of East Tennessee, where Confederates were usually "of the wealthy and aristocratic classes living in or near the towns," while the Unionists "came from the yeomanry of the rural and mountainous regions." Campbell, "East Tennessee," 65.

[25]Burns, Blount County, 33; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 28. A typical notice, dated July 20, 1841, directed Major J. C. Murphy to proceed to open and hold an election at the usual muster grounds in Cades Cove for the purpose of electing one captain, one first lieutenant,

Local justice was administered by two squires after 1836 when Cades Cove became the sixteenth civil district of Blount County. Most disputes involving quarrels, property division, petty violations and fines were handled within the community by their justices of the peace; only rarely was it necessary to take a more serious offense to the circuit court in Maryville. These local magistrates were almost always men of some education and wealth, whose unquestioned integrity lended gravity to their judgments. The personal respect and esteem in which they were held by the cove people formed a secure consensus, or framework, of law and order within the community. This sense of security was shattered in 1861, however, when Daniel D. Foute and Curran Lemons, both of whom had served continuously as justices since the 1840's, gave their allegiance to the Confederacy.[26]

That their magistrates would join the Rebels and actively assist enemy guerrillas raiding the cove horrified the majority of the residents who remained Unionists. It also meant that for all practical purposes, their traditional form of local justice had collapsed, because they identified the law with the personal integrity of their squires, and during the early years of the war no new officials could be elected. Nor was any redress possible from the county court at Maryville, where, even after Confederate occupation ended, Rebel forces continued their

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and one ensign for above company attendant by me." Original document in author's possession.

[26]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 32; Burns, Blount County, 41-42, 65.

raids as late as the winter of 1863-64.[27] The old justice of the peace dockets reveal graphic evidence of this suspension of local justice in Cades Cove. Curran Lemons made his last entry on May 15, 1861; Foute's last entry in his docket was on February 7, 1862. Not until 1865 were entries resumed by newly elected justices Daniel B. Lawson and Nathan H. Sparks, both of whom were strong Unionists but far less literate than their predecessors.[28]

Foute was also serving the community as postmaster in 1861. Cades Cove had been established as a U.S. post office as early as June 28, 1833, and extant letters of the cove people testify to the importance and frequence of their correspondence with friends and relatives in other sections of the country. The war disturbed routine mail service, and Foute's Rebel allegiance discouraged attempts to send letters through normal channels, since intercepted correspondence might furnish information to Confederate authorities.[29] In an area of comparative isolation, discontinuance of postal services increased the cove people's sense of

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[27]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 32; Burns, Blount County, 62.

[28]No other contemporary manuscripts give such a sense of hiatus, or political disruption caused by the complete breakdown of civil order in the cove as these justice of the peace dockets. Foute's docket dates from 1856 to 1922; Lemons' docket dates from 1851 to 1929. Many of the earlier pages in both dockets have unfortunately been torn out. Both dockets in author's possession.

[29]Absolom C. Renfro was the first postmaster, serving until 1836, when he was replaced by Daniel H. Emmet. Foute served from 1843 until the close of the Civil War, not from 1837 until 1847 as is erroneously stated in Skipper and Gove, "'Stray Thoughts,'" Part I, 131. Allen M. Ross, Director, Industrial Records Division, National Archives, to John W. Oliver, July 14, 1948; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 29.

alienation and estrangement from the outside world, especially since newspapers were difficult to obtain in the war years.

Dr. Calvin Post, the only other prewar leader, acted as the official correspondent in the cove for federal forces, certifying the loyalty of various individuals to Union authorities and writing passes for loyalists going through the federal lines to Knoxville. Because of his outspoken loyalty to the Union and his prewar abolitionist campaigning, however, he was a particular target of the North Carolina guerrillas. Early in the war these raiders placed a price on his head, dead or alive, and forced him to go into hiding in the mountains. Not until 1865 was he able again to assume an active role in the community.[30] As a physician and scientist, moreover, Dr. Post was unprepared to provide the needed military leadership in forming a local defense organization.

In the spring of 1862, Confederate authorities "first attempted to disarm the people," according to a contemporary Blount Countian, "and for this purpose sent troops through the country, taking up the hunting rifles wherever they could be found."[31] Such rifles had long been a household necessity to cove families, particularly when guerrilla raids depleted other food supplies and forced them to subsist on game. North Carolina officials attempted to enforce the Confederate conscript laws in the same year, forcing the few remaining men in the cove to go into

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[30] Post Papers, passim.

[31] Will A. McTeer, "Among Loyal Mountaineers," in Miscellaneous Pamphlets on the Civil War, 1, an undated volume in Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville. A prominent Blount County lawyer, local historian, judge, and state legislator, Major McTeer served in the Union army. Burns, Blount County, 213.

hiding. An elaborate scheme to construct a military road from Sevier County, Tennessee, to Jackson County, North Carolina, with forced Union labor also failed because the men in Cades Cove and surrounding areas had successfully evaded their persecutors by hiding out in the mountains.[32]

The greatest threat to the cove came in 1863 when North Carolina guerrillas began systematic attacks against the community. These "bush-whackers," as they were commonly called, were often outlaws who used the Confederate cause to justify their atrocities against the civilian population in the cove. "They would make raids into Tennessee for the purpose of robbing the people of their horses, cattle, and goods," reported one contemporary observer, "and would never fail to murder all the Union men they could find, and appropriate their property to their own use."[33] On several occasions Governor Zebulon B. Vance denounced the excessive brutality of these raids from North Carolina, but the guerrillas were beyond the control of Confederate authorities in the rugged wilderness of the Great Smoky Mountains. Familiar from prewar commerce with both the terrain of the cove and the lifestyle of its people, these raiders struck without warning from the cover of surrounding mountains.[34]

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[32]Arthur, Western North Carolina, 609.

[33]Daniel Ellis, Thrilling Adventures of Daniel Ellis (New York, 1867), 407.

[34]Arthur, Western North Carolina, 600-604; Burns, Blount County, 65.

Too distant from Maryville to receive any assistance from other Unionists, Cades Cove by 1863 reeled from a succession of these devastating guerrilla attacks. Murder became commonplace. In the prewar community, individual murders were remembered and recounted in great detail, such as the murder of Martin Wiseman by John Thurman in the early 1830's over an argument about an election, or the accidental shooting of Tom Frazier by William Davis, who mistook him for a deer. Now, no one could keep count of the cove men who were ambushed by the bushwhackers, or who simply did not return from the mountains.[35] The vagueness of many such rumors was corroborated by the numerous examples of sudden deaths, ambushes, and traps which the cove people had witnessed themselves. A pervasive sense of helplessness only increased the terror and paralysis within the cove.

Typical of the hardships endured by the average citizens during this period are the experiences of Elijah Oliver's family. Early in the war, Elijah had moved his wife and four small children up on the Rich Mountain to escape guerrilla attacks. No place was immune, however, as Elijah's son, William Howell, later recalled in a poignant description of his family's ordeal:

> My father did not enlist in the Civil War. He would lay out and work in the fields of a day to make bread for his wife and children. He was a Union man in principle. . . .
> . . . . . .
> Sometimes he would have to go down in the settlement and get a yoke of cattle to haul feed and firewood this was in time of war. On one occasion he went out after the cattle and the rebels caught him and kept him two weeks. This was one of

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[35] J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 25-26; II, 27.

> the hardest trials my mother ever went through. They shot him in the hand before he surrendered. But after this he got away from them in the night and finally got back home. I can remember the shouts of my mother the night he come in.
>
> On another time we were grinding our cane on a wooden cane mill and boiling the juice in kettles in a furnace. In this way the people would make their molasses when all of a suden two armed rebels came up, they striped the horse and took him off with them, leaving our cane patch standing, and us nearley on starvation. We never got the horse back. When we seen them comeing, my father ran off and hid thinking they would take him, but when they started with the horse and scarcely got out of sight my father came out and made for his gun. My mother caught around him telling him it would never do, that the whole army might come and kill us all, and so she constrained him to let them go, saying it would be better to lose the horse, than it would be to lose some or all of our lives.
>
> At another time we lost every bite of bacon that we had, and it war times and none to sell, makeing it awful hard on the family of little children. Although I was small only from five to eight years old, I can remember hearing the cannons roar and when we would hear of the rebels comeing we would carry out the beding and Pa's gun and hide them in hollow logs until they would pass and be gone. I can remember Ma puting the best clothes on us that we had she said that they would not strip them off of us to take them.[36]

Food was the greatest problem. Not since the winter of their initial settlement in 1818-1819, when the Cherokees kept John and Lucretia alive with dried pumpkin, had the Oliver family been threatened with such famine. Guns were contraband, liable to be seized by the Rebels on any occasion, and ammunition was in short supply throughout the war. Elijah made frequent trips to Knoxville to purchase medicine for his family, as numerous extant passes and loyalty oaths indicate. He had little cash, however, since few marketable crops could be grown up on the Rich Mountain, and the produce from such subsistence farming as he was able

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[36]Quotations from manuscripts continue to be given without change in the original spelling or orthography. W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 21-25.

to do was almost always stolen by the Rebels. Simple traps were used by the family to snare small animals such as squirrels and rabbits, but frequently the guerrillas stole such meager portions from their table before they could eat. This constant stealing and raiding made it almost impossible to accumulate more than a few days' food supply, so they subsisted daily on a hand-to-mouth basis, threatened constantly with starvation.[37]

Throughout East Tennessee, the situation was similar. Traversed by both armies which lived mainly off the countryside, the region was stripped of food by guerrilla outlaws and retreating Rebel soldiers after Burnside's occupation of Knoxville in the fall of 1863. The Pennsylvania Relief Report, commenting on the worsening condition of the people in the winter of 1863-1864, noted that even the thrifty Quaker settlement in Blount County, formerly one of the most prosperous communities in East Tennessee, now was forced to apply to the army for quartermaster rations.[38] Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator reported in March that Union people living outside the federal lines were deliberately plundered of everything they had; even such items as blankets and shoes were forcibly stripped from their owners. Although the East Tennessee Relief Association was successful in obtaining food and clothing from the federal government and Northern philanthropic organizations, such

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[37] Ibid., 34-35. Elijah Oliver's Civil War passes and loyalty oaths in possession of Judge W. W. Oliver, Maryville, Tennessee.

[38] Campbell, "East Tennessee," 70; Report to the Contributors to the Pennsylvania Relief Association for East Tennessee by a Commission Sent by the Executive Committee to Visit that Region and Forward Supplies to the Loyal and Suffering Inhabitants (Philadelphia, 1864), 18.

assistance came too late materially to aid remote areas such as Cades Cove[39] (see Appendix, Figure 9).

In the spring of 1864, the few remaining old men in the cove organized to resist continuing guerrilla raids. In so doing, they revived an older sense of community among the cove people which enabled them to act collectively to defend themselves. Three reasons for this revival are apparent. First, the sheer desperation of their situation convinced many residents that some decisive action, regardless of the risks involved, was necessary if any of them hoped to survive the war. Burnside's long awaited occupation of Knoxville had not brought any relief from guerrilla raids. The remaining women and children could not continue indefinitely living at such a subsistence level, particularly since the approach of winter made game scarce and hunting more difficult. Any activity to acquire or store food in the daytime was observed by the raiders, who promptly stole every accumulation of supplies, including livestock and domestic animals. Although they were aware of frequent murders and other acts of retribution, most of the cove people were now willing to undertake some form of active resistance as the only possible alternative to slow starvation.[40]

Second, the guerrillas made a critical mistake in attacking the Primitive Baptist Church, forcing it to close and the minister to flee for his life. Always fatalistic in their outlook, the congregation

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[39]Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator, March 5, 1864; Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, 316-33.

[40]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 15.

could accept personal deprivation and individual suffering with bewildered resignation. But an attack against the church represented a far more ominous threat. Conditioned by decades of warnings against efforts to persecute their sect and destroy the church, they now seemed to be witnessing the fulfillment of all the older jeremiads. This apparent assault on their religion released a tremendous psychological reaction against their persecutors. Moreover, to a people steeped in biblical images and stereotypes, no group seemed more the incarnation of evil than these North Carolina guerrillas. Consequently, it is not surprising that leadership of the home guard came largely from members of the Primitive Baptist Church such as Russell Gregory and Peter Cable.[41]

Third, resistance came as a result of the outstanding leadership and organizational ability of Russell Gregory. Traditional leaders, such as their squires Foute and Lemons, were Confederates; Dr. Post was in hiding, and John Oliver, old and weakened from long illness, had died on February 15, 1863. Widely known and respected before the war as a rancher and herdsman, Russell had always preferred to live alone in the wilderness for most of the year in his stone house on Gregory's Bald. An old man when the war broke out, he was staunchly loyal to the Union but too feeble to enlist. Embittered by his son Charles's defection to the Rebels, he vowed to take no part in the conflict.[42]

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[41]Primitive Baptist Minutes, June, 1865. The strongly pro-Union position of the Primitive Baptist Church is analyzed in Chapter IV.

[42]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 14-15.

The desperation of the community in the winter of 1863-1864 finally changed Russell's mind. Long despised by the North Carolina raiders "for his bold outspoken defiance of their dastardly and cowardly raids on the almost defenseless old men, women, and children of the cove," and weakened from illness and malnutrition, "his old fighting spirit was yet strong." Not satisfied only to organize and drill the old men in a home guard, Russell also developed an early warning system using all the women and children in the cove to keep watch at the North Carolina passes used by the guerrillas and relay the alarm throughout the cove. Morale improved dramatically, since everyone now had a useful task in contributing to their common defense, instead of waiting helplessly for the next attack.[43]

Utilizing this warning system, Gregory received word in the spring of 1864 that the raiders were on their way, following their usual pattern of entering the cove suddenly from the upper or northeast end. Summoning his aged neighbors in a carefully planned strategy, Gregory led these old men of the home guard in cutting trees across the road at the lower or southwest end of the cove near the forks of Forge and Abram's creeks. Here they concealed themselves behind their blockade and waited for the raiders, who would have to use this wider route to herd their bounty of stolen cattle and horses back to North Carolina.[44]

At this point, one of those incidents occurred which illustrate the personal anguish caused by family divisions over the war. Unknown to his

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[43] Ibid., 15.

[44] Ibid.

father, Charles Gregory was among the raiders entering the cove. Half a mile before they reached the blockade, Charles was stopped by his sister, who inquired after some of the family still living in North Carolina. Impatient to join his comrades, Charles was purposely detained by his sister who held on to his horse's reins and continued to make small talk. While thus engaged, Old Long Tom, Russell's famous rifle, fired, opening the battle at the blockade. "There goes Old Long Tom," Charles exclaimed as he spurred his horse to break away, "and my old Daddy is at the breech."[45]

The battle only lasted a few minutes; no one was killed, but two of the Rebels, Jack Grant and DeWitt Ghormley, their leader, were wounded. Charles met his comrades in hasty retreat; they returned to North Carolina by another route, leaving all their booty and stolen livestock behind. This victory gave the community an enormous psychological boost; the invincible raiders had been routed by a small band of old men, and forced into an ignominious retreat. The popular exhilaration was expressed in a lengthy ballad celebrating the blockade victory composed by two sisters, Moriah and Mintie Anthony, who lived only a short distance from the scene of the skirmish. "I'd rather be a Union man, and carry a Union gun," the first stanza began, "than be a Ghormley man, and steal a cow and run!"[46]

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[45] Ibid., 15-16.

[46] Ibid., 18. Captain Ghormley's raiders were active in several other coves, particularly in Tuckaleechee Cove, where his horse was shot from under him by a member of the fifteenth district home guard, Green Dunn, the author's great-grandfather. Burns, Blount County, 65.

The blockade battle thus marked a turning point in the cove's struggle to survive, since the guerrilla bushwhackers were forced as a consequence of the newly organized home guard to abandon their devastating daylight attacks, although they continued to strike sporadically at night. Correctly blaming Gregory for the community's successful resistance, some of the same band returned under cover of darkness two weeks after the battle, forced their way into his home, and murdered Russell as he rose from his bed. His martyrdom only increased the community's outrage and will to resist, however, and Russell Gregory's reputation grew to legendary proportions among the cove people after his death.[47]

Cades Cove was also a station terminus in the "underground railroad" which aided Union soldiers escaping Southern prison camps to reach the federal lines in Knoxville. This underground railroad was possibly the greatest contribution of East Tennessee Unionists to the war effort—Confederate troops were tied up in attempting to prevent escapes, Union soldiers were restored to their units, and much military information on enemy troop locations and other important data were passed along to federal authorities by the participants and their guides.[48] One such prisoner, Charles G. Davis, a young lieutenant in the First Massachusetts

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[47]The details of Russell's death were given to J. W. Oliver by Noah Burchfield, a grandson, who was fifteen years old at the time and assisted in preparing the body for burial. J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 16.

[48]W. B. Hesseltine, "The Underground Railroad From Confederate Prisons to East Tennessee," ETHS Publications, No. 2 (1930), 55-59; Paul A. Whelan, Unconventional Warfare in East Tennessee, 1861-1865 (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1963), 114-51; Arnold Ritt, The Escape of Federal Prisoners Through East Tennessee, 1861-1865 (Master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1965), 17-54.

Cavalry, escaped from the infamous Camp Sorghum at Columbia, South Carolina, on November 4, 1864, and making his way through the Smokies, reached Knoxville on December 5, 1864, with the assistance of the people of Cades Cove. In an excerpt from his diary he left a vivid description of the community at war:

> December 2nd: We arose about daybreak and again started on our trip. We had some hard climbing for an hour or so, but the descent soon commenced and continued until we reached Cades Cove. We entered the Cove about 3 p.m. and very unexpectedly caused quite an alarm. A girl was on duty as a sentinel. She gave the alarm with a horn. When she blew the horn we were looking down the Cove. In an instant it was alive. The men were driving their cattle before them, and every man had a gun over his shoulder. We asked the girl to point out the home of Mr. Rowan (after telling her who we were), assuring her that we were friends. We marched in and went to Mrs. Rowan's home. She was very much frightened when she saw us, but we soon satisfied her that we were friends. She informed us that they were looking for the Rebels every moment. Rather pleasant news for us. We had not more than got seated when a woman came running up the road to Mrs. R., and informed her that the Rebs were coming. We jumped up ready to run, but we soon found out that the woman had taken us for the Rebels, and that it was a false alarm. Mrs. Rowan said she could not keep all of us, so five of us started over to the home of Mr. Sparks to whom she directed us. We soon found out that our entrance had alarmed all of the inhabitants of the Cove. The men left the fields and fled to the mountains. It soon became known who we were. They commenced to collect around us. We were resting very comfortably at Mr. Spark's telling our story when a horseman came riding up from the lower end of the Cove and said "the Rebels are coming sure," that one of the citizens had seen them. All was confusion for some moments. The men picked up their guns and we our blankets and started for the mountains. We reached a safe place. After waiting for an hour, we found out that it was another false alarm. The report had gone down one side of the cove and up the other. We all returned to Mr. Spark's house and ate a hearty supper. We found all good Union men here. They all have to sleep in the bushes every night, and have for the past two years. They live in continued terror of being

> killed. At dark we went to the bushes for our night's rest.[49]

Lt. Davis was grateful that "while on the escape from prison life, sick, tired, and foot sore," he had accidentally fallen "into the hands of the loyal, liberty-loving men and women" of Cades Cove. They not only fed and clothed him, but "sent one of their number to pilot me through to Knoxville." In that city, he reported that Union authorities, convinced of the community's absolute loyalty, were sending ammunition back with his guides "for the citizens of Cades Cove." Davis also related an anecdote about the girl sentinel in the cove which offers some insight into the bitterness and grim defiance four years of guerrilla warfare had engendered in the cove people:

> The girl was the sentinel that guarded the entrance to the Cove, and at the signal from her, which was of approaching danger, the men, who were tilling the soil, drove their cattle to places of safety, and then put themselves in readiness to defend their dear ones and their homes from the Guerrillas and Bushwackers, who had invaded their little settlement many times during the War. I remember asking the girl on guard what she would do if a stranger should demand the horn of her before she could have used it, and her reply was rather a surprise to me as I had always had a great respect for women, but had met only the kind that used soft words, those who had not been on the "battle line," so to speak, those who had lived in pleasant homes and surroundings. Her reply was that she should tell him to go to "Hell!" And from my knowledge of her as a sentinel on duty, I am very sure that she would have done so.[50]

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[49] Excerpt from typed manuscript of Major Charles G. Davis, copy in Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville. The original is the property of his grandson, Mr. Eliot Davis, Grand Marais, Minnesota. For a discussion of various routes out of the prison camps at Columbia, South Carolina, see Whelan, Unconventional Warfare, 124-40, and W. H. Shelton, "A Hard Road to Travel Out of Dixie," Century, XVIII (October, 1890), 931-49.

[50] Ibid.

As the tide of war turned in favor of the Unionists during the last year of the conflict, the fortunes of the Confederate leaders in the cove necessarily declined. No man was more hated, or visible for his loyalty to the South than Daniel D. Foute, who ironically had done more than any other individual before 1860 to improve the economic life of the community, building roads, operating a bloomery forge, and serving as legal advisor and magistrate for the cove people. Yet he had undeniably given all possible assistance to the Rebel guerrillas, spying on the community and reporting their activities and whereabouts to the Confederates. His daughter, Ethie M. Foute Eagleton, mentioned in her diary that Foute housed numerous Confederate soldiers at "Paradise Lost" throughout the war years.[51]

Trapped in a moral dilemma, Foute, basically a decent man, found it increasingly difficult to reconcile his Confederate allegiance with the atrocities committed by North Carolina guerrillas in the cove. On one occasion, he personally intervened to prevent the kidnapping of a cove youth, Noah Burchfield, and forcing him into Confederate service. Later historians erroneously have asserted that "during the stressing times of the Civil War" Foute "bought farm after farm until at one time he owned most of Cades Cove."[52] Most of the 20,000 acres he owned at the time of his death in 1865 had been bought at fair prices from cove residents moving

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[51]Ethie travelled back and forth to Cades Cove throughout the war. Her son, Exile, was born there at "Paradise Lost" on April 22, 1863. Skipper and Gove, "'Stray Thoughts,'" Part II, 118.

[52]J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 8-9; Gamble, Heritage and Folk Music, 49.

to the West in the 1840's and 1850's. In fact, many of these deeds specifically mention an exchange of wagons and gearage for the move West.[53]

Foute's daughter offers no explanation of why her father remained in the cove and refused to seek safety in the lower South. His friend, Sterling Lanier, who had assumed management of Montvale Springs in 1857 and purchased the resort with his brother in 1860, anticipated the end of Confederate government in the state with the surrender of Fort Donelson in February, 1862, and wisely moved his family back to Alabama before Burnside's seige of Knoxville.[54]

Foute refused to follow suit, although it is clear from his daughter's diary that the entire family were well aware of the sorry tale of vengeance—harrassment, libel, flogging, robbery, and even murder—which awaited Southern sympathizers in East Tennessee after Burnside's occupation of Knoxville and the political ascension of the vindictive Parson Brownlow, who became governor in 1865.[55] Granted the opportunity for escape and the certain knowledge of retribution, it is

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[53]Blount Deeds, 1840-1860, passim; Agreement between Reuben Tipton and Daniel D. Foute, September 17, 1841, and Agreement between Jacob Tipson and Daniel D. Foute, September 5, 1845, mentioning an exchange of land for wagons, gearage, and horses, in author's possession.

[54]Skipper and Gove, "'Stray Thoughts,'" Part II, 116-28; Wright, "Montvale Springs," 61.

[55]In August, 1864, Ethie Eagleton's husband, George, a Presbyterian minister, was lured from his home and brutally beaten. Skipper and Gove, "'Stray Thoughts,'" Part II, 119. Brownlow denounced Ethie as a "she-devil, the wife of a rebel preacher," who "had come in advance of him to spy out the land." Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator, March 15, 1865.

difficult to surmise why Foute remained in Cades Cove, if not because of a deep personal attachment to his home there. At the close of the war, he was dragged unceremoniously from his sick-bed in the cove by federal troops, who hauled him to Knoxville and threw him in jail. He died shortly thereafter, paroled but still under guard, at the Knoxville home of another daughter, Mrs. Hamilton.[56]

Shortly after peace was declared in 1865, Elijah Oliver moved his family from the Rich Mountain back into the cove. Amid the enormous devastation caused by four years of protracted guerrilla warfare, he found a community which had undergone profound changes. Gone were most of the outstanding leaders of an earlier generation: Daniel D. Foute, John Oliver, and Russell Gregory were dead by 1865; Peter Cable died in 1866, and Dr. Post lived only eight years after the close of the war. The new generation who had come of age during the war years were far less literate; deprived of the time and means of gaining an education, most of the younger leaders such as the newly elected squires, Daniel Lawson and Nathan Sparks, were provincial and introspective to a degree which would have surprised their predecessors.[57]

The average people had also changed dramatically during the war. Guerrilla warfare engendered bitterness and hatreds which lasted for many years. Many Confederates left the cove because of this hostility,

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[56]Burns, Blount County, 65. Ethie "heard that everything Pa had was taken from him, poor old man to be deprived of the comforts of life in his old age. . . ." Skipper and Gove, "'Stray Thoughts,'" Part II, 123.

[57]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 16-35; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, II, 30-32.

among them the Foute, Bradford, Lemons, Cobb, Campbell, and Pearce families. Gradually the community resumed its prewar commerce with Knoxville, but inwardly its society became increasingly closed.[58] In contrast to the influx of numerous immigrants from many parts of the United States and foreign countries during the 1840's and 1850's, few new families entered the cove after 1865. The kinship structure expanded to include practically every person in the community. In 1850, there were eighty-six surnames in a population of 671; by 1880, only forty-five surnames were listed in a total population of 449.[59] Intolerance of any innovation or change, suspicion and fear of strangers, and excessive reliance on the extended family—behavioral patterns necessary for survival during the war—now proved difficult or impossible to discard.

The Civil War was thus clearly a watershed for both the internal society of the cove and for the community's declining position after 1865 in relation to the rest of the state and nation. Daniel D. Foute's great dreams for the cove's economic development in the decades before 1860 were completely destroyed by the war's holocaust; no new entrepreneur of comparable ability or vision would replace him. But the community, however altered, had survived; the ties which bound the cove people to one another were stronger than ever. In the close-knit, introspective

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[58]Burns, Blount County, 276. For the postwar effects of guerrilla warfare, see Whelan, Unconventional Warfare, 148-49.

[59]1850 Census, Population, Blount County; 1880 Census, Population, Blount County.

and retrospective society which now faced the protracted economic depression of the larger region in the decades after 1865 were rich ingredients for an authentic folk culture. In that emerging culture, the war experiences furnished a model folk hero; linking the combined values of love of their mountain wilderness with unselfish service to the community was the memory of Russell Gregory.

CHAPTER VI

THE FOLK CULTURE

Brooding over the moral and physical devastation resulting from the Civil War, fearful and suspicious of strangers, and engulfed in a protracted regional depression after 1865, the people of Cades Cove became increasingly introspective and retrospective during the Reconstruction Era. They had always been isolated from the outside world geographically. In the prosperous 1840's and 1850's, however, numerous immigrants from various parts of the nation and world had assured the community of frequent exposure to new ideas and attitudes. After 1865, the cove was no longer part of the Westward Movement; few new families entered the community, and the remaining families were related by blood and united in common values and attitudes through their shared wartime experiences.

If the war served as a crucible which burned out of the community diversity and innovation, it also left a vacuum in the lives of people who, despite their geographic isolation, had always relied heavily on commerce and news from the market centers of East Tennessee. Gradually, the market economy recovered, and cove farmers resumed the familiar pattern of selling their crops in Knoxville and Maryville and purchasing various mercantile goods there. In the wake of the terrible destruction from the war, however, there was little regional unity, politically, socially, or economically; after the central goal of winning the war had been accomplished, most of the rural communities of East Tennessee became

isolated units temporarily alienated by poverty and bitterness from the larger region.[1] Although a cove farmer might continue to bring his crops to Knoxville, he no longer felt any closeness or sense of community toward those outside the cove proper. The vacuum caused by this alienation and these temporary divisions within the larger region was filled by strengthening ties among themselves, thereby intensifying an already strong sense of community within the cove.

In this atmosphere, an indigenous folk culture developed which compensated the cove people in part for their economic losses and greatly enriched the quality of their relationships with one another. Cultural historians, folklorists, and anthropologists have long disputed the exact nature and definition of "folk" cultures.[2] For the purpose of this chapter, folk culture is defined simply as the totality of shared experience, knowledge, and mythology which the cove people communicated orally among themselves. The totality of this folk culture functioned almost as a foreign language, inasmuch as it gave to the cove citizen both a frame of reference for interpreting new events and a code of anecdotes by which various attitudes or emotions could be immediately

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[1] Folmsbee and others, Tennessee, II, 97-149. Parson Brownlow's Radical Republican regime exacerbated existing political differences and retarded the state's postwar economic recovery. Thomas B. Alexander, Political Reconstruction in Tennessee (Nashville, 1950), 69-245; Fertig, Secession and Reconstruction, 61-108; Verton M. Queener, "A Decade of East Tennessee Republicanism, 1867-1876," ETHS Publications, No. 14 (1942), 59-85.

[2] According to one scholar, "the present relationship between folklore and anthropology could almost be defined as one of mutual contempt." Norbert F. Riedl, "Folklore and the Study of Material Aspects of Folk Culture," Journal of American Folklore, LXXIX (1966), 557-63.

identified to other members of the group. An important corollary to this folk culture is the means by which it was expressed (regional dialect and its deviation from standard English).[3]

This interpretation of folk culture is formulated only to explain and analyze the development of oral traditions within the cove and their functional value in the daily relationships of the cove people with one another. No serious study of folk culture can avoid, however, the warnings of Richard M. Dorson, who argues that the study of folklore has been "falsified, abused and exploited, and the public deluded with Paul Bunyan nonsense and claptrap collections" by money-writers who "have successfully peddled synthetic hero-books and saccharine folk tales as the stories of the people."[4]

The geographic isolation of the cove, for example, is one element in the development of their folk culture which must be examined with maximum critical skepticism. The diversity and number of immigrants moving into Cades Cove before 1860 offers patent evidence that the community was at one point neither inaccessible nor an undesirable place

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[3]This definition follows the lines of American anthropologists "who have insisted on treating culture as a whole or in its entirety." German anthropologists, conversely, define folk culture "as being the unconscious, unreflective, traditional part of culture, distinct from the totality of man's learned behavior." Ibid., 558-59. See also Robert Redfield, "The Folk Society," American Journal of Sociology, LII (1947), 293-308, and Richard M. Dorson, "Current Folklore Theories," Current Anthropology, IV (1963), 93-112.

[4]Dorson's criticisms of various approaches to folk culture apply particularly well to early writers such as Robert Lindsay Mason and Horace Kephart who visited Cades Cove and attempted to analyze the people and mountain culture there. Dorson, American Folklore, 8, 15-48.

to live.[5] The cessation of new immigrants after the war, and the expulsion of pro-Confederate families did lead to increasing social isolation and conformity. But this isolation was always relative. The cove people continued to sell their crops in Knoxville, receive visitors from other sections of the country, and remain informed of major state, national, and international events through an occasional newspaper. In turning its collective attention inward, the community did not completely cut itself off from the outside world, although it is a common fallacy of local historians to envision such geographic and social isolation in absolute, either-or terms. Thus the cove people could develop their own body of shared traditions and experiences while at the same time they remained cognizant of changes and broad trends in the larger American culture.[6]

Another fallacious assumption about the origin of the folk culture in the cove was the national origins of the inhabitants, and by inference, the transmission of certain corollary national traits or characteristics. As late as the 1920's, commentators on life in the cove saw descendents of "pure" Anglo-Saxon blood there who maintained ancient English speech patterns and customs, speaking the language little altered since Queen Elizabeth reigned. Other writers confidently asserted that in these

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[5] 1840 Census, Population, Blount County; 1850 Census, Population, Blount County. For an analysis of the origins of immigrants to the cove before 1860 see Chapter III.

[6] J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 5-7. For evidence that cove farmers continued to market their crops in the larger commercial centers of East Tennessee after the Civil War, see Chapter III.

remote coves of Southern Appalachia, "blood tells," and the sturdy Scotch-Irish descendants maintained an independence of spirit and sturdiness of mind and character which made them the envy of their decadent relatives in other parts of an increasingly industrial and urban America.[7]

Such conclusions about the cultural homogeneity of the cove inhabitants resulting from common national origins reveal more about the preconceptions and erroneous assumptions of these writers than about the actual folk culture of the cove. Men like Robert Lindsay Mason and Samuel Tyndale Wilson found what they were looking for in the cove through the process of selective perception, a process cultural anthropologists now explain as the cause for such gross misrepresentation of American Indian customs by early colonial observers, who alternately perceived their red brethren as the lost tribes of Israel or the children of Satan. Wilson viewed the mountaineers both as a panacea for the ills of industrial America and as an antidote to the influx of "un-American" foreigners.[8]

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[7]A classic enumeration of early stereotypes regarding Southern Appalachia was written by a former president of Maryville College, Samuel Tyndale Wilson, The Southern Mountaineers (New York, 1914), 11-78. Other writers who visited Cades Cove and perpetuated existing stereotypes of the mountain people and their culture are Mason, Lure of the Great Smokies, 22-209; Horace Kephart, Our Southern Highlanders (New York, 1922), 286-452; John C. Campbell, The Southern Highlander and His Homeland (New York, 1921), 72-151; and Laura Thornborough, The Great Smoky Mountains (New York, 1937), 8-18.

[8]Mason, Lure of the Great Smokies, 57-61. Wilson believed that these "mountaineers of the near future will help the nation win many battles for temperance and other social reforms." "Take courage," he exhorted his weary readers, "you who in many states are fighting your apparently death-struggle battles against an organized and wealthy

Actually, non-English immigrants were numerous in the cove. German names were frequent; Myers, Headrick, Cable, Rowan, Herren, and Shuler are examples. Cable, a corruption of the original Köbel, is illustrative of the frequent Anglicization of German names which often obscures their origin. The Myerses, one of the cove's largest extended families, still preserve the German Bible of their progenitors as proof of their origin. Families of French extraction were also common, bearing such names as Lequire, Foute, Fearel, Feezell, Boring, Nichol, Pastuer, Lemon, Laurens, Seay, Emmert, and Freshour. Three families of Dutch origin were listed in the 1850 census; some of their children married into cove families and lost their distinctive surnames (Lafabra, Sucan, Faurfort), but possibly not their cultural traditions from Holland.[9]

An interesting anecdote from the nineteenth century reveals the cove people's own awareness of the diverse national origins of new settlers. Before the Civil War, a stranger settled there and taught school. Several years after his arrival, another stranger visited him, and they conversed

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saloon-power upheld by depraved Americans and by many as yet un-Americanized though naturalized foreign immigrants! If you will but listen, you may hear the 'tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching' of Americans from the free hills, coming to share with you the contest and to join with you in the victory that awaits our common cause. Be assured that these stalwart recruits from 'the land of the mountain and the glen' will stay in the fight to the finish." Wilson, Southern Mountaineers, 190.

[9]These names are taken from the 1830, 1840, and 1850 census, Population, Blount County, but the French and German origins of most of these families has been established by genealogists. See Edwards and Frizzell, The "Connection," 1-3, for a discussion of the Myers and Headrick families. Actually, the census records show many names which appear to be non-English, i.e., Manol, Nugon, Nossun, Nupell, Swany, Cuttan, Shlessell, Deasmon, and Rustil, all from the 1850 Census, Population, Blount County.

in an unknown tongue which even the German Cables could not understand. Some of the natives speculated that their strange school teacher was one of Napoleon's defeated generals living in exile among them![10]

The most cursory look at the early census returns also indicates a wide diversity in the geographic origins of the cove people from other parts of America. Since John Oliver, the first permanent white settler, arrived as late as 1818, most of the early families had been in the United States for at least a generation before that date. The demographic picture up until 1860 reveals constant flux, waves of cove people moving further west as new immigrants from widely diverse places entered the cove. Until 1860, it would be impossible to identify any distinctive feature or indigenous pattern of cove culture, since most of the population had moved there as adults from other sections of the United States.[11] This lack of cultural consensus, however, does not preclude identifying various ingredients, such as the carpentry and engineering skills earlier noted in Peter Cable, who was of Pennsylvania Dutch extraction.

In its broadest definition, the folk culture emerged in the cove after 1865 due to wartime experiences, the expanding kinship structure, economic difficulties which drew families together, and a sense of alienation from the surrounding region. This culture was not defined

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[10]James B. Wright, Great Smoky Mountains National Park (Knoxville, 1938), 57.

[11]1830 Census, Population, Blount County; 1840 Census, Population, Blount County; 1850 Census, Population, Blount County; 1860 Census, Population, Blount County.

by its component parts, but rather by the collective use of these ingredients, past and present, by the community. Complex as such a functional definition seems, it reflects the basic fact that the cove culture was never static, often creative, and could always use or incorporate outside experience as well as traditional knowledge passed down from father to son. To define its perimeters, for example, an authentic English ballad (and there were many of these), might be shared by the community at the same time a popular song imported from Knoxville circulated through the cove, or a group might compose a ballad to commemorate some notable event which had only recently occurred. What the traditional ballad and the popular song shared in this culture, obviously, was not their respective origins, but their collective use by the community, the value assigned to the song which everyone in the cove recognized and shared.[12]

The folk culture in this sense was only a system of shared values, experiences, and myths of various origins, but each one of these oral expressions had a specific, well-defined common meaning to every member of the community. Every past attempt to analyze or dissect the folk

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[12]Interview with John W. Oliver, November 4, 1963. Other than interviews with several elderly cove residents, my primary source for the following description of the cove's folk culture stems from my own participation, if somewhat removed, in that culture as a descendant of the Oliver family. Margaret Mead has correctly established direct participation in a culture as the only viable method of analyzing its component parts, although she usually chose a primitive culture in some other part of the world. Margaret Mead, Coming of Age in Samoa (New York, 1928), 7; Mead, From the South Seas (New York, 1939), ix-xxxi. See also Alan Dundes, ed., The Study of Folklore (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1965), 219-338; Kenneth S. Goldstein, A Guide for Field Workers in Folklore (London, 1964), 13-171.

mind of the cove has failed, because no scholar has ever perceived the importance of seeing in its totality their shared knowledge within the context of such an intensive communal life style. Bits and pieces were meaningless outside the context of the whole, so a wide variety of characterizations of life in the cove were made by various writers oblivious to the inherent incompleteness and internal contradictions of their observations or conclusions. Even the natives were not directly conscious of the elaborate format of their folk culture; they took these things for granted, understood them from early childhood almost intuitively, and could not explicitly identify or describe what they implicitly knew and believed, and considered common knowledge. Thus the parts were often described adequately by outside observers, but by their very fragmentation such descriptions rendered any empirical analysis invalid.[13]

As the easiest introduction into the folk mind of nineteenth century Cades Cove, it is probably most obvious to begin with the physical geography of the cove and surrounding mountains. Densely inhabited by comparative standards, the cove proper contained no streamlets, no meadows, fields, rocky ridges, or trees too small not to be named. Writers interviewing residents of the cove who had lived there during the last century neglected to analyze this basic, obvious phenomenon of an elaborately detailed folk geography. Cove natives could immediately

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[13] Ibid.; Kephart, Our Southern Highlanders, 238-307; Campbell, Southern Highlander, 123-51.

identify specific geographic locations, because everyone knew even the most minute spots by name and reputation. These tiny locales or landmarks were anthropomorphic, too, in the sense that the human history surrounding them was carefully preserved and enumerated from time to time. Corroborative evidence of this phenomenon occurs in the deeds, which often mention small and insignificant marking points by name; the implicit assumption on the part of the magistrates who drew up such deeds was that each identifying landmark would be so well known by all the cove residents that such identification could stand up in court.[14]

Much more substantive, the crux on which the entire folk culture rested, was the intimate knowledge of one another which the community shared. It began with genealogical data: all the known relatives, living and dead, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc., of any single resident was common knowledge, frequently recited, to all members of the community. In such a close-knit society, secrets concerning one's personal life or family were practically impossible to keep, and an attempt to conceal any major event was interpreted in the worst possible light as both an obvious indication of guilt and an affront to and rejection of the entire community. Individuals might forgive one another such omissions readily enough in Christian charity, but the collective folk mind seldom forgave or forgot.[15]

The net result of this constant scrutiny of every individual in the community was that in an almost computer-like fashion, every variety and

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[14] Ibid.; Blount Deeds, 1830-1880, passim.

[15] Interview with John W. Oliver, September 5, 1963.

instance of human behavior or misbehavior was recorded and remembered. Cove children early learned, for instance, of Uncle Jack Anthony's profane reaction on being struck by lightning while riding his prize mule, even though the individual in question might have been dead for thirty years, or his family might have departed the cove several decades earlier. The important point here is that these characterizations and anecdotes on every individual who lived in the cove for the past fifty years were absolutely staggering in both their number and detail. It is likewise difficult to comprehend the fact that each rational member of the folk culture was required to recognize instantly the anecdote, its actor and context, and the moral or value reference surrounding it.[16]

This knowledge served many functions. A whole range of complex emotions could be identified readily by reference to an incident in someone's past personal history; in this sense, these anecdotes or characterizations functioned as a code or second language, often inpenetrable or incomprehensible to an outsider. This second language, far more than any supposed dialect, made adjustment difficult for those residents moving outside the cove, because in so doing they lost not only the intense sense of belonging and being cared for by the entire community, but also this larger folk knowledge of each other which no one outside the cove could fathom; it was almost as though one of their senses had been removed to leave such an environment. This frame of reference was timeless in its application, because the value assigned to

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[16] Ibid.

each incident had to remain unchanged to function as an identifying factor. The perspective which this code gave to the average cove resident was particularly reassuring in the turbulent years after 1865, binding together as it did the past, present, and developing future in a common, universally understood frame of reference.[17]

The folk knowledge also served a didactic purpose in socializing their children, inasmuch as deviant behavior could be stigmatized by reference to one of the folk characters which was far more stinging than customary upbraidings. This function extended to adults also, since no one willingly incurred the risk of ridicule by odious comparisons to these types, or chanced the even greater liability of acting in such an egregious fashion that they themselves became typed and immortalized in the folk memory as an opprobious example to future generations. All types of variant behavior were reproduced in these anecdotes, an unusual way of walking, plowing, etc., might attract the attention of the folk mind as well as unusual experiences. Included in such characterizations were variant pronunciations or unusual combinations of words, a factor which often misled those folklorists collecting examples of dialect, since they seldom realized the mimicking capacity of the folk or the

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[17] Ibid. The binding force of their common culture and sense of community often made removal from the cove difficult for postwar residents, although early writers failed completely to comprehend this situation. Wilson, for example, lists inertia, attachment to the mountains, love of independence, lack of ambition, nostalgia, timidity, poverty, and lack of precedent as the basic reasons that Southern mountaineers refused to emigrate from their homes. Wilson, Southern Mountaineers, 62-63.

enormous number and variety of such deliberate mispronunciations that were reproduced as part of the common store of folk knowledge.[18]

Viewing the folk culture in the context of the total cove society, it is also important to point out that there were definite divisions within that society which might appreciably alter or color one's perception of the community's shared knowledge. The majority of cove farmers living in the fertile basin shared a consensus of common ideas and values. The smaller subgroup living in Chestnut Flats, however, completely rejected the majority's condemnation of their insobriety, sexual promiscuity, disregard of the work ethic, and abstention from membership in any of the churches. This subculture in Chestnut Flats thus developed its own system of folk culture basically antagonistic to the cove majority, although there were common elements shared by both cultures which could not be ignored. Since each group defined the other in such hostile, negative terms, it is only logical that their respective interpretation of common elements in the cove culture would differ. Yet commentators on life in the cove were rarely cognizant of this very basic distinction in cove society, and frequently characterized the majority by information given by a member of the minority group.[19]

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[18]For a plethora of excellent examples and illustrations of their use in specific contexts, see Joseph S. Hall, Sayings from Old Smoky (Asheville, N.C., 1972), 1-149.

[19]Ibid. Wilson did perceive differences among the mountain people, although he made three classifications based on these differences which were completely erroneous. Wilson, Southern Mountaineers, 19-25. Mason made the mistake of representing men whom the community considered notorious outlaws as "typical mountaineers." Mason, Lure of the Great Smokies, 106-261. Unfortunately many of the stereotypes and misconceptions of writers such as Mason and Horace Kephart have been uncritically

It would also be logical to assume a definite correlation between the decline in literacy and the development of a folk culture after 1865. Dr. Jobe in 1849 recalled attending a school "of the most primitive order" in 1825 in the cove, but concluded that "the kind of instruction given to us then was better adapted to the wants of the people than the curriculum of studies generally taught now in the higher schools."[20] The emphasis on discipline and the development of basic skills which he described in the 1820's seems to have prevailed throughout the century. Before 1836, "article" schools were common in the cove; a schoolmaster took subscriptions, or "articles of agreement," from the people to teach school in the community. These sessions usually lasted two months, and the teacher "had to have practically no qualifications except that he could write a good hand and knew the old blue back speller and the New Testament." When the cove became the sixteenth civil district in 1836, each district elected three directors who hired a teacher. The schoolmaster thus chosen was required to pass an examination once a year administered by the county superintendent, so the standards for

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perpetuated by modern authors such as Michael Frome, Strangers in High Places (New York, 1966), 57-69, 145-60.

[20]Dr. Jobe began writing his autobiography in 1849, and these statements are in the early part. "The discipline in the primitive schools in my opinion was firmer, but more commonsense and reasonable, than we find in modern schools. At the 'old field schools' as they were called, we had no recess, as it is now called. It was study from morning till noon, then an hour for play time, and study from one oclock till turning out time. And teachers received less than half the tuition now paid. . . . Under Butler Tipton, William Davis, Arindatis Martin and others, who taught in Cades Cove and Tuckeleache Cove, the students advanced rapidly. My memory was good, and I made fine progress at these schools." Jobe, Autobiography, 15-16.

selecting teachers were broadened and basic or minimal qualifications were required. These free or common schools usually operated only a few months out of the year, and did not offer instruction beyond the fifth grade.[21] In the period after the Civil War, there is ample evidence that these free schools continued to operate, however. One extant authorization by the Cades Cove school directors in 1874 mentions paying J. C. Sprinkle fifty dollars for teaching the free school No. 2, which indicates at least two schools were in operation at that time.[22]

So the literacy rate, or quality of the average citizen's ability to read after 1865 is difficult to measure, particularly as a function of the folk culture. From the records of the Primitive Baptist Church, the handwriting and orthography seems to decline noticeably after the Civil War. Census statistics in 1870 indicate a high percentage of school-age children had attended school within the year, yet these same statistics indicate that 36 percent of the adult population could not read, and 58 percent were not able to write in that year.[23] It seems

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[21]Gamble, Heritage and Folk Music, 54-55. Five members listed as school directors for the sixteenth civil district of Blount County in 1869 were John Oliver, Will Lawson, Calvin Post, A. B. Burchfield, and J. B. Gregory. Burns, Blount County, 173, 320.

[22]N. H. Sparks and William A. Feezel, School Directors, 16th Civil District, Blount County, Tennessee, to Elijah Oliver, Clerk and Treasurer, January 16, 1874. Original in possession of Judge W. W. Oliver, Maryville, Tennessee.

[23]Primitive Baptist Minutes, 1830-1880, passim. In 1870, 101 children between the ages of six and sixteen had attended school within the year; 21 children in this age group had not. Out of 138 adults, twenty-one years old or older, 50 indicated they could not read, and 80 that they could not write. 1870 Census, Population, Blount County.

probable to conclude that the postwar decline in the cove literacy rate coincided with the development of their folk culture, although this generalization must be qualified by pointing out that roughly half the adult population in 1870 were literate, if the census figures are not completely inaccurate. This literate half, moreover, was reasonably well informed about state and national events, and still retained the intensive, detailed knowledge of the cove's internal affairs required by the folk culture.[24]

An important function of this folk culture was entertainment in the form of innumerable folk narratives, tall tales, Märchen, jokes, proverbs, puzzles, and sayings (idioms). Examples of each of these generic types could be cited to conform to the patterns of Volkskunde in the traditional European classification. Three basic types of folk narratives reoccur with sufficient frequency and consistency in the cove folk culture to justify close examination: tall tales (often involving the absurd, as in the German Märchen), ghost stories, and narratives of war experiences.[25]

Possibly as a result of their wilderness environment, most of the tall tales from the nineteenth century folk culture of Cades Cove concern extraordinary feats involving wild animals. These tales range from the absurd, Märchen-type stories primarily designed to entertain children to

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[24] J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 7-8; W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 27-52.

[25] Interview with J. W. Oliver, October 13, 1963. These various folk narratives were repeated to the author innumerable times in his own childhood by elderly former residents of the cove; the fact that they were part of a shared culture makes specific citations difficult, since every member of the community was familiar with them, and the same story was often heard from different sources.

more involved narratives which approach some degree of credibility among the adult population. An example of the former type is the phantom cat, who, chasing a man to his porch, remarked, "some footrace we had." Whereupon the exhausted man raised up and replied, "Not like the one we're going to have," and started running again.[26]

A popular tale in the nineteenth century involved a common European motif of a woman alone in the mountains escaping a pack of wolves. In the cove version, the old woman was returning home with meat for her children after assisting a neighbor in killing hogs. As the wolves neared, she dropped pieces of the meat to distract them, finally arriving safely home just as the last scrap of meat was gone. The animal most frequently involved in these tall tales, however, was the panther, whom the cove people feared and believed capable of attacking people. Such an experience was related to Justice Douglas in 1962 about Tom Sparks, who claimed to have been attacked while herding sheep on Gregory's Bald, and to have driven off with a pocket knife the panther which had jumped on his back.[27] Sparks's tale is reminiscent of most of the tall tales involving hunting and panthers during the nineteenth century.

Tall tales differed from other types of narratives inasmuch as they usually did not involve the supernatural (except in Märchen-type stories primarily intended for children), and approached some degree of credibility. The most notable such tall tale was related to Mellinger Henry, a

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[26]The phantom cate was a favorite motif and reoccurs in countless variations in such tall tales primarily intended for children. Ibid.

[27]Ibid.; Douglas, "People of Cades Cove," 90.

folklorist exploring the cove area in the 1920's, and described how Hattie Carrell Herron Myers was carried off by an eagle as a small child. Hattie was playing in her back yard on Abram's Creek while her mother did the family washing. Suddenly the eagle swooped down, fastened its talons in the little girl's clothing and started to fly off. The mother screamed so loudly, according to the story, that the eagle became frightened and dropped the child uninjured into some nearby bushes.[28]

Ghost stories were extremely popular in the folk culture, as the number and variety of such extant supernatural tales from the nineteenth century testify. More than tall tales, however, these ghost stories occasionally had a specific function or didactic purpose in the culture: commemorating a notable citizen or event in the past, or marking carefully on the collective folk mind some particular crime or injustice was frequently accomplished by means of such stories. For example, a cove farmer returning home intoxicated late one night in the 1870's was angered by the cries of his newborn infant, and demanded that his wife quiet the baby. Occupied with some other task, she was momentarily unable to comply, whereupon the father seized the infant in a great rage and crushed his skull. In the area around the house where this infanticide occurred, the cove people claimed to be able to hear a ghostly baby wailing and crying for many decades afterward. This supernatural phenomenon reflected the community's sense of horror and outrage at the event, and kept the details

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[28]Mellinger E. Henry, Folk-Songs from the Southern Highlands (New York, 1938), 18.

of the murder before the folk mind as an example and warning, even though the guilty farmer soon moved out of the cove.[29]

Tales of war experiences were also popular and served to idealize and commemorate the nation's wars, particularly the Revolutionary War, in the folk mind. Lt. Davis, escaping through the cove from a Southern prison camp during the Civil War, remarked with amazement how the old-timers in neighboring Tuckaleechee Cove entertained him with Revolutionary War stories.[30] John Oliver had a plethora of tales which he related about General Jackson and his experiences at Horseshoe Bend in the War of 1812. How determinative these stories were in molding the consensus in the cove against secession in 1861 is impossible accurately to determine, but it is undoubtedly true that such war tales, told repeatedly through the years, served to transform the early national wars into unrivaled standards of accomplishment and patriotism in the folk mind. Oliver recounted how the Cherokee chief, Junuluska, swam under water to cut loose enemy canoes at Horseshoe Bend, an action he considered paramount to their ultimate victory. Another representative tale, as recalled by his grandson, William Howell, concerned Oliver's experiences in this war associated with picket duty in the midst of hostile Indians:

> He said that one of those wild Indians had killed a wild hog and skinned it and wrapped himself up in the skin of that wild hog so completely that his hands and feet was not easely detected and under that skin he had a dagger and tomahawk. He would crawl along untill he would get close enough to the man at the

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[29]Interview with J. W. Oliver, October 13, 1963.

[30]Davis Manuscript, December 3, 1864.

> post, then he would throw off the skin and burst upon the sentinel without any alarm, he then killed the man and carried him off some distance and concealed him in the leaves, he then covered himself again in his hog skin and fixed for another man. This he done untill he had killed three brave men, and no trace of them could be found. This so amazed the company that the fourth man whose turn it was to take the post trembled from head to foot. The captain then stated that he would have no man against his will. A man immediately stepped from the ranks, and desired to take the post, telling the captain that if a crow chattered or a leaf fell that he would hear his muskett. My Granfather said they all shook hands with him and went away to their duty. He said that it had not been very long untill they heard his gun fire, they all went to see what he was doing, upon arrival they saw the man comeing dragging the Indian by the hair of his head. The man said he had not been verry long at his post till he seen this wild hog as it seemed to be prowling along hunting for nuts, but kept his eye upon it untill he thought he saw him give an unusual spring, upon which he no longer hesitated, took his aim, discharged his piece, and immediately the animal was stretched out before him with the groan of a human. This unfolded the mystery of what had happened to the other three men that were lost.[31]

Bearing in mind the fact that the entertainment function was only one part of the totality of the cove folk culture, it is unfortunate that folklorists in the twentieth century badly distorted this totality by selecting only certain parts of it to collect and analyze. No group was more guilty of this sort of selective perception than ballad collectors. Granted that ballads were themselves intrinsically interesting, and that from all accounts Cades Cove was an unequaled reservoir of many varieties of ballads in the Southern Appalachian mountains, collectors nevertheless ignored the historical context of these ballads and made no real effort to analyze their function within the cove folk culture. Richard Dorson has pointed out the fallacy of such researchers whose

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[31]W. H. Oliver, Sketches, 1-3.

collections "include technically excellent works" but "remain on the level of text-hunting." Instead of comparing variations with the European Ur-type, Dorson argues, such ballads should be evaluated within the context of normative American experiences such as the Westward Movement, regionalism, and the nation's wars.[32]

In the summer of 1928, Mellinger E. Henry discovered in Cades Cove people who "still talk to some extent the language of Shakespeare's time and sing the songs and ballads of that period." Isolated by their mountain environment, these people of "Anglo-Saxon stock" cling "even yet to the manners and customs of the 18th century." In a series of articles in the New Jersey Journal of Education and in two published collections, Henry documented a vast array of traditional English and Scottish ballads from Cades Cove, including such rare songs as "Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard," "Lamkin," "Johnny Scot," "Sir Hugh, or the Jew's Daughter," "Lady Isabel and the Elf Knight," "Earl Brand," "Young Beichan," "Lord Thomas and Fair Annet," "James Harris," "Bonny Barbara Allan," and "The Maid Freed from the Gallows."[33]

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[32]Dorson, American Folklore, 17-77.

[33]Henry's articles and head-notes to ballads are found in the following issues of the New Jersey Journal of Education: February, 1926, p. 5; March, 1926, p. 6; September, 1926, p. 20; February, 1927, p. 7; June, 1927, p. 9; December, 1927, p. 11; March, 1928, p. 13; February, 1929, p. 10; March, 1929, p. 12; April, 1929, p. 10; May, 1929, p. 9; September, 1929, p. 9; November-December, 1929, p. 10; January, 1930, p. 10; March, 1930, p. 8; October, 1930, p. 4; November-December, 1930, p. 6; January-February, 1931, p. 15. Henry, Folksongs from the Southern Highlands, 1-449; Mellinger E. Henry, Songs Sung in the Southern Appalachians (London, 1934), 1-253.

Henry doubtlessly performed an invaluable service in identifying and preserving these traditional ballads, but he ignored the larger folk culture which transmitted them and concentrated on collecting only those songs with recognizable English antecedents. Cognizant of the fact that ballad-making was a continuing process, he nevertheless ignored ballads from the later nineteenth century which reflected such signal experiences as the Civil War. Although most of the ballads came from Cades Cove, he randomly lumped them together with those from other parts of the culturally heterogeneous Southern Appalachians. If Henry was oblivious to the patent distinctions between the cove community and the larger region, he was similarly blind to variations among individual informants who supplied the ballads. The Harmon family, his chief source, had moved to Cades Cove in the twentieth century, for instance, and were not necessarily representative of the older folk culture.[34]

Henry's scholarly myopia was partially corrected by Margaret Elisabeth Gamble in her 1947 Southern California thesis entitled "The Heritage and Folk Music of Cades Cove, Tennessee." Perceiving the vital relationship between the community and oral expressions of the folk culture, she made a sustained effort to analyze the social context of the seventy-six ballads she collected from former cove residents. Descended from a former resident, she had an immediate entree few other scholars had previously enjoyed. Yet Gamble never quite understood what she had found, possibly due to the fact that the community had already

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[34]Henry, Folksongs from the Southern Highlands, 19-21.

been dispersed by 1947, and she was unable to grasp the totality of the folk culture through the eyes of individual and elderly informants.[35]

Gamble discovered that the largest group of songs, more numerous than even the traditional ballads, were hymns of the variety known as "old harp songs." Harp singing was introduced to the cove after the Civil War by various singing masters who were paid by the community to conduct a school in which interested people could learn the notes and methodology of harp singing. This type of singing, widespread throughout the area, was especially popular in Cades Cove because it had the approval of the dominant churches, particularly the Primitive Baptist. The majority of the cove community strongly disapproved of the more salacious songs sung by the subcommunity in Chestnut Flats, and stigmatized these as "jigs" or "carnival songs."[36]

Remnants of the older folk culture were discovered accidentally by Gamble in 1946 when she attended one of these harp singings. To her amazement, former cove inhabitants called the songs by number, never by name; "they knew the book so well that the pages were even memorized."[37] The folk culture was determined not by its ingredients, as formerly stated, but by the collective use and knowledge of whatever information was deemed necessary or desirable. In this instance, harp singing was not indigenous to the cove, since it had been imported after 1865 and was commonly practiced in the larger region. Yet the folk culture

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[35]Gamble, Heritage and Folk Music, 1-207.

[36]Ibid., 63, 68, 109-15; J. W. Oliver, Cades Cove, I, 17.

[37]Gamble, Heritage and Folk Music, 112.

embraced these hymnals, assigning a value and identity to each song so that one had only to call the number to identify it to the entire group. This mechanism of assigning common value or identity to a wide range of phenomena functioned regardless of whether the ingredient was old or new, and meant that the folk mind was both flexible and expanding in incorporating other concepts. New ideas could also come from literary sources, since the mastery of harp singing required the participant to both read and learn the notes.[38]

An extremely important aspect of the folk culture was the dialect, or variant form of spoken English used by the cove inhabitants during the nineteenth century. Early writers believed that Elizabethan English, or at least survival forms common in the eighteenth century, were still used by cove inhabitants well into the twentieth century. Other writers such as Mary Noailles Murfree and Horace Kephart, portrayed Southern Appalachian dialect in such a distorted and grotesque fashion that they completely misinterpreted regional speech patterns. Kephart, according to one critic, "seems to have been impressed particularly by what would look like good dialect on paper, and his notes and published writings scarcely do justice to the speech which he seeks to represent."[39] Even when Justice William O. Douglas, an untrained phonetician, attempted to describe orthographically the speech of Cades Cove inhabitants in a 1962 National Geographic article, the result "was a kind of mimicked dialect

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[38] Ibid., 58.

[39] Joseph S. Hall, The Phonetics of Great Smoky Mountain Speech (New York, 1942), 4. See also Kephart, Our Southern Highlanders, 350-98.

of the variety used in comic strips such as 'Snuffy Smith' or 'L'il Abner.'"[40]

The first scholarly analysis of the regional English of Cades Cove came in 1942 with the publication of Joseph S. Hall's The Phonetics of Great Smoky Mountain Speech. Since earlier articles by scholars interested in Southern mountain dialect, such as Josiah Combs and Charles Carpenter, had been primarily concerned with lexicography, Hall undertook to record and analyze phonologically representative samples of the speech patterns of all the people in Tennessee and North Carolina who were dislocated by the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.[41] Severely criticizing popular writers like Kephart who had badly distorted regional mountain speech, he initially found few vestiges of earlier stages in the growth of the English language, which these writers had so frequently characterized as "Anglo-Saxon," "Chaucerian," or "Elizabethan." He concluded that Smoky Mountain speech showed "no sharp cleavage from the speech of most of America," although there were "close affinities with the speech of the rest of the South."[42]

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[40]M. Jean Jones, The Regional English of the Former Inhabitants of Cades Cove in the Great Smoky Mountains (Doctoral dissertation, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1973), 33.

[41]Hall, Phonetics, 1; Josiah Combs, "The Language of the Southern Highlander," PMLA, XLVI (1931), 1302-22; Charles Carpenter, "Variations in the Southern Mountain Dialect," American Speech, VIII (1933), 22-25; Gordon Wood, Vocabulary Change: A Study of Variation in Regional Words in Eight of the Southern States (Carbondale, 1971).

[42]Hall, Phonetics, 4.

In a more recent study, Hall attempted to analyze the folk culture of the cove people through their use of proverbial sayings and common expressions:

> Careful examination of these sayings will etch scenes and awaken echoes of the past life in the Great Smokies. These scenes and echoes reveal folk skills and the strong ties between the people and their farms and farm animals. There are also strong linguistic ties to life in the fields and forests, and in the rugged mountains; there are, too quaint allusions to the hard work of farming, the hearty sport of bearhunting, the work of women at their tasks "never done," as the proverb goes. There are moods of weariness, sadness, joy, and pleasure, and humorous outbursts of wild exuberance. There are echoes of frontier brags and tall talk. There are occasional restrained hints of sin and sex. There are references to worn-out soil, to the lush, jungle-like growth of plants and trees, and to changes of weather. There are frank or rustic and sometimes witty characterizations of people, especially as to their oddities. There are references to the violence of moods and emotions that angered men are capable of feeling.[43]

His modified conclusion that many of these sayings "go back at least to early English" was corroborated by M. Jean Jones in a 1973 dissertation at the University of Tennessee. Working under the direction of Harold Orton, one of Britain's most distinguished dialectologists, she applied advanced methodological techniques for phonological research to the speech patterns of five elderly former inhabitants of Cades Cove who had remained comparatively isolated since removal from their homes during the late 1930's. She concluded that the cove people spoke a homogenous dialect characterized by a fairly persistent pattern of vowel fluctuation. More significantly, she offered convincing phonological evidence that the cove speech patterns were further characterized by

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[43]Hall, Sayings, 1.

forms of grammar and vocabulary common in earlier English, but long discarded in modern usage.[44]

The diversity and vitality of the nineteenth century folk culture of Cades Cove are evident in the surviving language and anecdotes of former inhabitants—language elsewhere outmoded, but full of earlier pictures of folk imagery. "If there is any one thing which illustrates simply and well a people's character or group personality," Hall rightfully concluded, "it is the language they use."[45] Thus surviving language and speech patterns reflect the common bonds of the cove people united by the excruciating ordeal of the Civil War and later economic depression. The folk culture in this sense was a continuing solace; through "favorite phrases describing such common things as land, people, time and weather; oaths and profanity; humorous remarks; and aphorisms,"[46] they reaffirmed their sense of community and faith in the essential humanity of one another.

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[44]Jones, Regional English, iii-iv.

[45]Hall, Smoky Mountain Folks, 54.

[46]Ibid.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Cades Cove during the nineteenth century paradoxically reflected both enormous change as a representative weathervane of political and economic currents within the larger region, and persistent cultural continuity as the community turned increasingly inward to cope with these changes. Had they lived until 1900, John and Lucretia Oliver, the first permanent white settlers, would have had little difficulty in understanding the community's later frame of mind, nor would they have been much surprised by the farming techniques, the use of the land and animals, which seemed scarcely altered at the turn of the century from their early years.

Yet both the Olivers had witnessed significant economic changes between 1818 and 1865 which place the apparent similarity of the cove's development at the beginning and end of the century in proper historical perspective. During the booming years of the 1840's and 1850's, new immigrants had flooded into the cove, bringing both innovative ideas and a diversity of cultural traditions. At this point, the cove was in the mainstream of the Westward Movement, serving as a receptacle not only for westering Americans but also for new immigrants from several foreign countries and, in turn, sending many of her own families further West.

In the two decades before the Civil War, there was also a creative energy and optimism which underscored the cove's rapid economic growth. Entrepreneurs such as Daniel D. Foute and Dr. Calvin Post nurtured

elaborate schemes to develop the cove's potential. If Dr. Post's letters in the 1850's to his New York mining company bosses—inveighing against them because they (prudently) did not invest large sums of money in his projected gold and silver mines—seem slightly ridiculous now, he nevertheless served the community ably with innovative suggestions on all aspects of horticulture and animal husbandry, as well as with medical advice and with his extensive knowledge of mining technology. Likewise, although Foute failed more often than not in his many economic ventures, such as the Cades Cove Bloomary Forge, in the process he constructed excellent roads out of the cove to regional markets which allowed the development of a market economy.

This market economy in turn reflected changes in the larger region, as the prices for produce alternately rose and fell. Like other Tennesseans in the prosperous decades before the war, cove citizens enjoyed the "golden age" of Tennessee agriculture. After the war, they were impoverished for decades as the market economy remained depressed and only slowly regained momentum. By the 1890's, however, the market was steadily improving, and the community could anticipate yet another change—this time propitious—as they faced the burgeoning economic boom in agricultural prices during the first decade of the twentieth century. Throughout the nineteenth, however, despite consistently excellent harvests from the fertile soil, the cove economy depended on the fluctuations in the larger regional market. In this sense, economic change was the single most important variable in the community's development.

Another variable which brought widespread political, social, and economic upheaval was the Civil War. In their political philosophy most of the cove people had remained unchanged; typically, John Oliver remained steadfast in his allegiance to Andrew Jackson, under whom he had fought at Horseshoe Bend in the War of 1812, while his native Carter County had in the interim become a Whig stronghold anathematizing Old Hickory. Like Oliver, the community remained loyal to their older civil government, and wished to be left alone with their traditional patterns of loyalty. Yet this very desire not to change brought the most tragic and devastating change in their lives as hostile North Carolina guerrillas systematically raided the community, murdering loyalists and through their pillaging, bringing starvation to the entire civilian population. Finally driven by desperation, the community under the leadership of Russell Gregory organized into a paramilitary camp to combat these guerrilla raids. Neither Gregory's successful defense of the cove nor his subsequent murder by the rebels, however, prevented a radical change in the community's character or composition during the course of the conflict.

Fighting to prevent change, they had nevertheless undergone drastic alterations by 1865. The enormity of their wartime sufferings and sacrifices made the remaining cove dwellers bitterly hostile toward pro-Confederate families long after the war. Moreover, increasingly intolerant and suspicious of strangers, the inhabitants were ever more prone to reject diversity or innovation, since trusting anyone not part of their group in the course of the conflict had often brought sudden

terror and death. These behavioral patterns necessary for survival during the war carried over into peacetime, and by 1865, the community—socially retrospective and economically retrogressive due to a regional depression—became even more radically different from the open, energetic, and forward-looking society of the prosperous 1840's and 1850's.

There were also enduring continuities in the cove's development. The wilderness environment of the surrounding Great Smoky Mountains remained constant throughout the century, and did not yield to adjacent farms or new settlements as occurred in other sections of the country. Whatever use the cove people made of this wilderness—whether it furnished food, wood, or merely recreation—it remained an ever-present factor in their lives, and offered temporary asylum to any member who tired of the intense communal life in the cove proper. With the exception of the Civil War period, when the mountains hid rebel guerrillas and afforded them the advantage of surprise attack, most of the inhabitants appear to have regarded their surrounding wilderness as a benign, if not benevolent, factor in their lives.

Religion offered the cove people a different type of continuity. The dominant Primitive Baptist church found security and solace in attempting to maintain their faith unchanged and inalterable in the face of continuing secular innovation. In attempting to remain the same, however, the church was often forced to change, if for no other purpose than to denounce revisionists, such as the Missionary Baptists; to deny orthodoxy to any other competing group inevitably meant forming a new critique, or interpretation, of a particular theological dispute. These

theological debates consumed the passions and energy of many of the cove inhabitants throughout the century, however, and were set apart from the more mundane frustrations or problems of any given decade. In that sense, the debate had a timeless, constant quality about it; during the war, for instance, the church was quiet within, in contrast to its stormy debates during the politically peaceful 1830's.

The hostility of the Primitive Baptist church to the Confederate cause illustrates an important ideological thread in determining how and why the community changed. Opposing their neighboring areas, particularly Western North Carolina, seemed to numbers of Southerners an inconsistent break with their past. Yet to the cove Baptists, theological innovation had long been anathematized as the greatest danger to their spiritual welfare. Was not an alteration in the old American political structure something very close to the type of theological innovation so inveighed against by a generation of Jeremiahs? The point is that in their own frame of reference, they were being completely consistent in opposing the innovation in the political order which the Confederacy represented. An attack against their church by the North Carolina guerrillas finally confirmed their worst fears and provided the strongest possible motivation for an energetic defense of what had now become fused: their religion, property, and personal independence.

If they ended up fighting old enemies in new disguises during the war, the cove people could draw on another enduring source of strength and continuity—their sense of community. Always isolated geographically, they had been drawn together during the 1820's to confront the wilderness

and fight the Indians. During the Civil War, close communal cooperation was again necessary for survival, and the economic depression in the decades after 1865 continued to make careful cooperation and communal responsibility important ingredients in their daily lives. Strengthening the postwar sense of community was the growing number of extended families remaining in the cove; by 1880, practically everyone was directly or indirectly related to one another.

Out of the postwar community emerged a distinctive folk culture, which in many respects was no more than a collective consciousness wherein people, their lives and anecdotes about them, as well as the physical geography of the cove, its traditions and folklore, were assigned a specific value or meaning which every member instantly recognized and appreciated. This collective consciousness was both a solace for their past losses and a guide to future actions; it imposed clear guidelines or limits, on the individual's behavior, but in turn offered the almost total sense of shared security in any future undertaking.

In light of this study, the people of Cades Cove appear far more complex in their historical development than the standard stereotypes of the Southern mountaineer in fiction or popular literature would indicate. They were neither the superhuman, romanticized figures of Mary Noailles Murfree, nor the wretched creatures living in depravity and degradation as pictured by the "Mountain Muckrakers." Rather, they were in the final analysis representative of the broad mainstream of nineteenth century American culture and society from whence they came: ordinary,

decent citizens who often reacted collectively—and within their limitations, courageously and responsibly—to the enormous economic fluctuation, social change, and political disruption surrounding their lives throughout the nineteenth century.

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APPENDIX

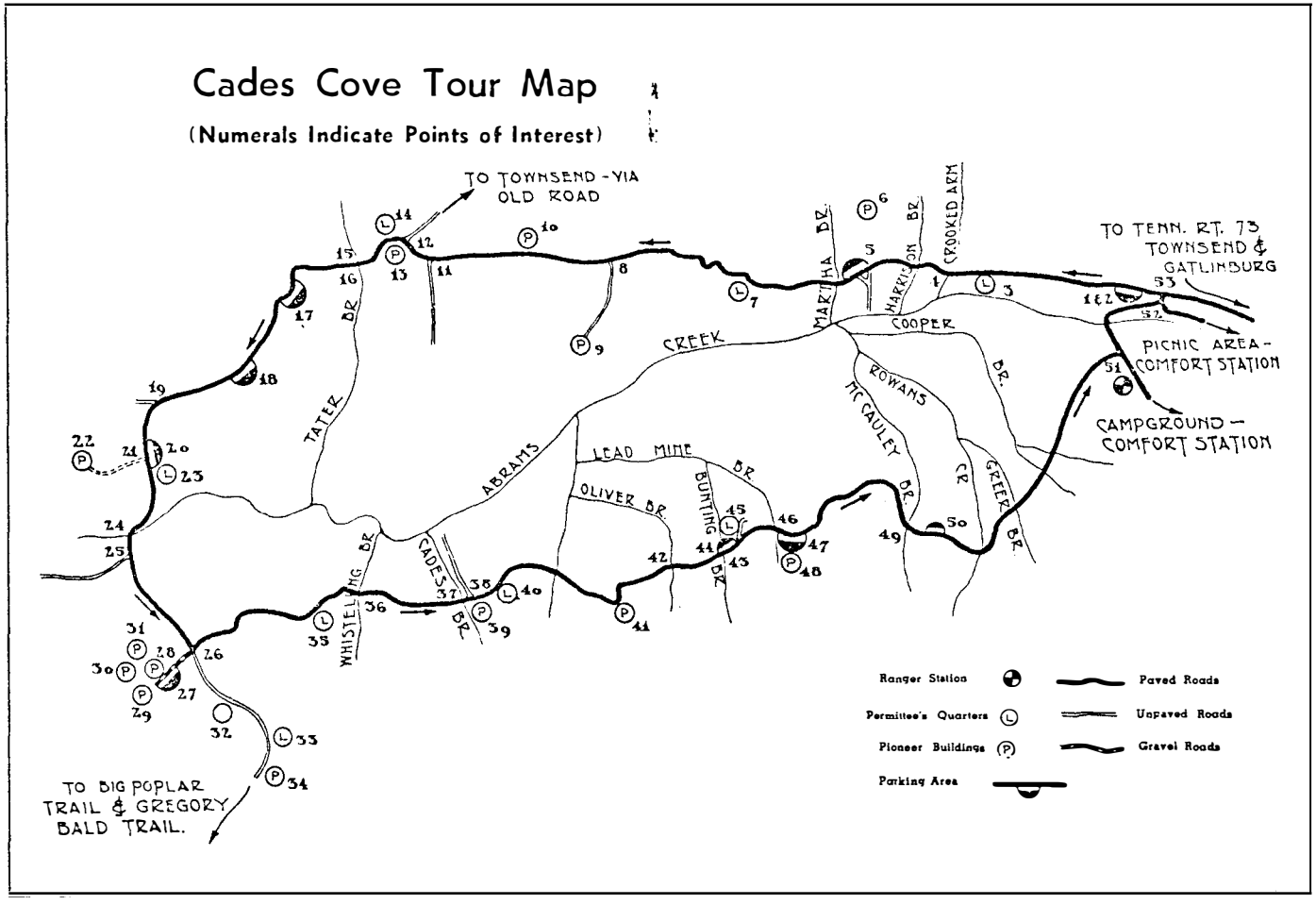


FIGURE 7

CADES COVE TOUR MAP

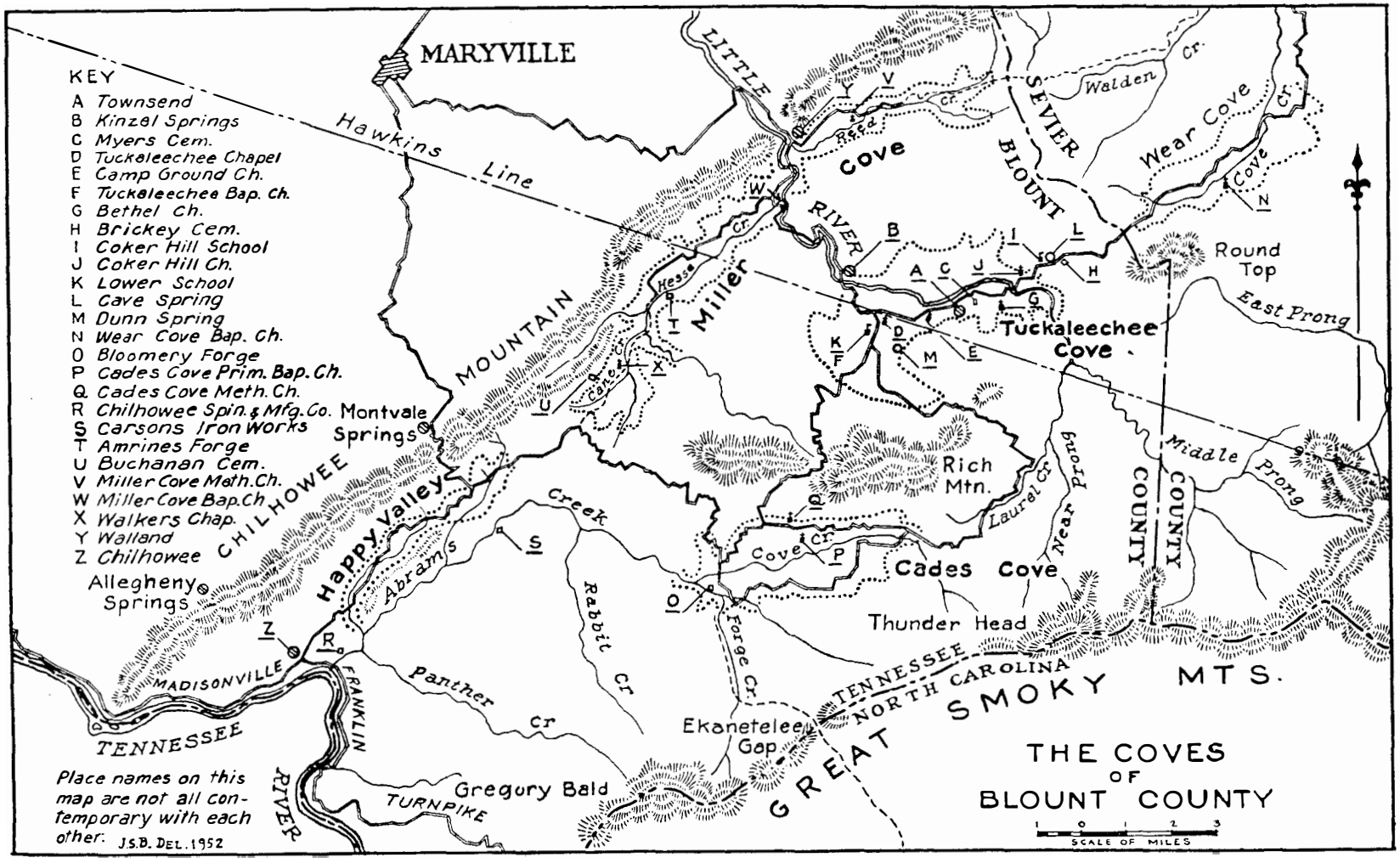


FIGURE 8

THE COVES OF BLOUNT COUNTY

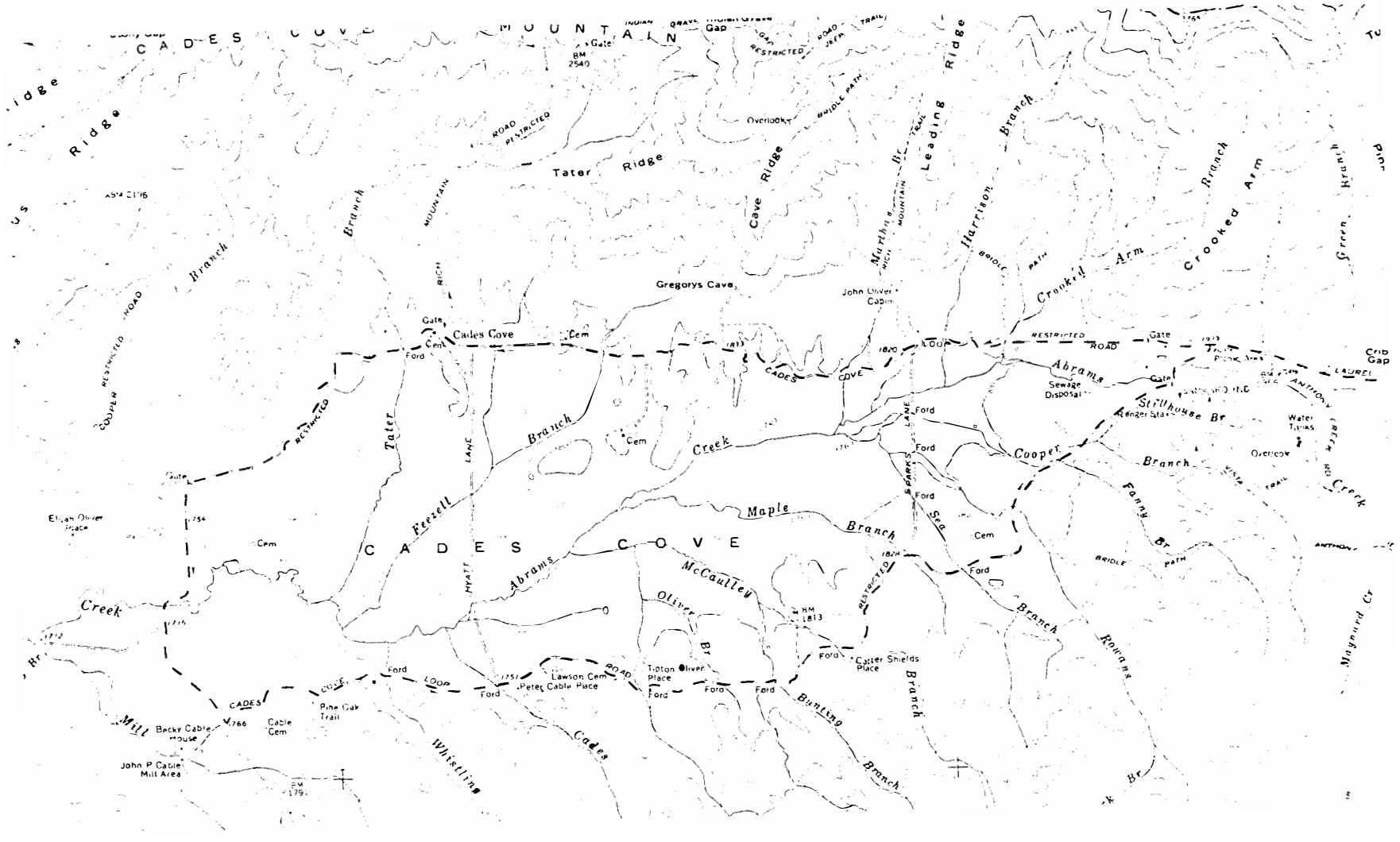


FIGURE 9

CADES COVE QUADRANGLE, U. S. DEPT. OF THE INTERIOR, GEOLOGICAL SURVEY MAP

VITA

Durwood Clay Dunn was born November 30, 1943, in Chickamauga, Georgia. After attending elementary schools in Chattanooga, Tennessee, he was graduated with honors from Chattanooga High School in 1961. He attended the University of Tennessee and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Latin and history with honors in 1965. In 1968 he received the Master of Arts degree in history at Tennessee, studying under Dr. Waldo H. Heinrichs. He taught history and political science from 1970 until 1974 at Hiwassee College, Madisonville, Tennessee. In 1975 he accepted a position as instructor in history at Tennessee Wesleyan College, Athens, Tennessee, where he is presently employed.

He received the Doctor of Philosophy degree with a major in history in August, 1976. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi, the American Historical Association, and other professional organizations.